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Cover:
Bishop Thomas Grant, (1816–70). Consecrated the first Bishop of Southwark in 1851, after the restoration of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy to England. From 1850 till 1882 Portsmouth was in the Diocese of Southwark.
(Photograph from the Archives of the Archdiocese of Southwark)

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REBIRTH OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN PORTSMOUTH

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After over two hundred years of proscription and restriction Roman Catholicism returned openly to Portsea Island in 1791. From the Reformation until this date there are hardly any records indicating what, if any, of the pre-reformation religion was practised on Portsea Island. There are, however, records of Roman Catholics living there,[1] and in 1791 there was estimated to be several hundred.[2] During the ninety one years following 1791 the congregation grew steadily until, in 1882, it became the centre of a new Roman Catholic Diocese.

Apart from some registers,[3] many of the original documents relating to Portsea Island Catholicism during these years, which were kept locally, were lost when Bishop's House in Edinburgh Road was completely destroyed by bombing during the Second World War. Consequently, most information from original papers has had to be sought from sources outside the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth. Of the two printed accounts of 18th & 19th century Catholicism in Portsmouth the first, by W. G. Gates,[4] gives no indication of his sources, and does not entirely agree with information in the original documents. The second, by Scantlebury,[5] though good, is limited in scope, because it is mainly an analysis of surviving registers of the period. Most other existing accounts are based on these two and are themselves, therefore, of limited value.

The Roman Catholics[6]

The term Roman Catholic probably came into use in England during the early years of the 17th century in order to distinguish those Christians who maintained communion with the Pope and the Church of Rome, from those Anglicans who, whilst asserting that they were part of the Universal Church, therefore Catholic, did not remain in communion with the Roman Church and Pope. The Act of Supremacy[7] (1559), declared that the Sovereign of England was the only supreme governor of the Church in England in all things spiritual, ecclesiastical and temporal. Gradually, over the succeeding years, the majority of English people came to accept this declaration, but there were a number of English Christians who, whilst expressing loyalty to the crown, maintained that they could not as a matter of conscience acknowledge the Sovereign as head of the Church in matters spiritual. Many of these dissenters, called recusants, were people whom we would now refer to as Roman Catholics because they kept the old tradition of the Church in England, and maintained communion with both the Pope and the Church of Rome. These recusants were considered to be traitors, because they were seen as having an allegiance to a foreign power, the Papacy. The majority of them stressed their loyalty to the English Crown in all matters temporal. However, the English Government deemed it necessary to subject them from 1559 until the end of the 18th century to a series of laws[8] that excluded them from public life, put them at a legal disadvantage in many matters, and condemned their priests caught exercising their ministry, and anyone who assisted them, to penalties including that of death. This situation remained until the passing of various Parliamentary Acts of Catholic Relief and Emancipation during the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries.[9]

During the time of suppression, known amongst Catholics as the 'Penal Time', the recusant laws were applied intermittently and unevenly throughout the country. This, and the growth of liberal ideas amongst the educated classes during the 18th century, encouraged Catholics to emerge more into the open while retaining a low profile. Slowly, during the 18th century places of Catholic worship began to be established, though strictly illegally, in gentry homes, such as Wardour Castle, and in some communities, such as Havant (1733) and Gosport (1759). The Test and Corporation Act of 1673 made it illegal to set up a Catholic Chapel in a borough such as Portsmouth, so Catholics living there would have had to travel to Havant or Gosport to receive the Sacraments. This situation was ended by the passing of the Second Catholic Relief Act in 1791.

At the time of the Reformation the Catholic Hierarchy in England was disbanded by the Government and replaced by bishops appointed by the Sovereign. Administration of the needs of the remaining Roman Catholics was placed by the Pope under the control of the Propaganda Fide of the Vatican. Therefore England was considered a missionary district, without distinct parishes or dioceses, and eventually, in 1623, was placed under the control of a Vicar Apostolic. This official was a Papal delegate, having the authority of a titular Bishop with ordinary jurisdiction, but with no cathedral, chapter of canons or territorial diocese. In 1688, four Vicars Apostolic were appointed, each administering to Catholic needs in a portion of England and Wales. This situation remained till 1840, when the number of Vicars Apostolic was increased to six. Eventually, in 1850, the Roman Catholic Hierarchy was restored to England with the creation of thirteen new dioceses. Before 1850, Catholics in the Portsmouth area were under the jurisdiction of the Vicar Apostolic of the London District, and after 1850, they came under the care of the Bishop of the Diocese of Southwark. Finally, in 1882 Portsmouth became the centre of a new Catholic diocese.

During the whole of the period covered by this study, the Roman Catholic Church in England did not have a parish structure. Each church or chapel was considered a Mission serving an undefined territory. The priests in charge were called Mission Rectors and, in the earlier days, were usually addressed as Mr, or the Revd, and not

Father. It was not until 1908 that the Vatican ceased to consider England a Missionary District, subject to the jurisdiction of the Propaganda Fide. Then, ten years later in 1918, when the Code of Canon Law was published, existing Missions became regularly constituted parishes with parish priests in charge.

The Start of the Portsea Catholic Mission

When the Second Catholic Relief Act[10] was passed in July 1791, making it legal again for Roman Catholics to practise their religion within the boundaries of the Boroughs, on Portsea Island the main habitation was concentrated in the south west corner of the island. The southernmost, the oldest area, was the Town of Portsmouth which in 1801 had a population of 7,839.[11] Just to the north of Portsmouth was the Town of Portsea, sometimes known as Portsea Common, which was barely a hundred years old and aleady had a population of 8,348.[12] This town had grown on Common Land around the Royal Dockyard to accommodate the increasing number of workers. The rest of Portsea Island was occupied by agricultural lands, saltings, marshes and a scattering of small villages. The two towns were each surrounded by extensive defensive ramparts which faced inland and restricted access to, and expansion of, the towns. As the population expanded, concurrently with the Navy and the development of overseas interests, accommodation within the ramparts was found by infill building. This led to overcrowding which, coupled with bad drainage and bad water supply, resulted in much ill-health.[13]

The 1791 Relief Act made it possible for Roman Catholics to practise their religion without hindrance, provided they took a loyal oath to the Monarch before the Quarter Sessions. Catholics were thus released from most, but not all, the restrictions and penalties previously imposed upon them. These restrictions had included prohibiting any Catholic priest from exercising his religious functions in an English Incorported Borough such as Portsmouth and Portsea. There was another Catholic Mission at Brockhampton, near Havant, and in 1791 its Rector there was the Revd Richard Southworth. Southworth was a senior district priest who acted as the Vicar Apostolic's Vicar General for Hampshire. In this capacity he wrote many letters to the Bishop about Catholic affairs in the area.[14] Thus, in Feburary 1792, he wrote about the newly created Portsmouth Mission

> I have before me a list of names of 130 Catholics who either come to their duty or catechism or instruction to Mr Cahill. Now of these 130 mentioned, only 27 went over to Gosport to prayers. Mr Conway remembers the time when only one came to Gosport from Portsmouth side. Mr Cahill has many with him besides those above mentioned whom he does not know. There are others who hitherto he has not been able to prevail upon to come, but hopes in time to bring them to their duty. He doubts not but the number of Catholics in Portsmouth Common and its environs amounts to several hundreds.[15]

Mr Cahill was the first priest since the Reformation legally to serve Portsea Island[16] Catholics, and the letter shows that before he came only a small proportion of them travelled across to Gosport for prayers. The journey and its cost must have been a major discouragement.[17] It may be deduced from other sources[18] that the Catholics on Portsea Island were mostly poor people and that the ones who did travel across to Gosport were the few tradesmen who were the better off; there were no Catholic gentry in the area.

Shortly after the 1791 Act efforts were made by some lay Catholics in Portsmouth and Portsea to set up a Mission in Portsea. The common practice in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was for Catholic Missions to be set up and managed by a committee of the congregation. These committees ensured that the congregation's better-off members paid regular subscriptions towards maintaining a priest and Chapel.[19] Southworth mentioned such a committee in Portsea in February 1792

> Some little time ago the principal members of the new congregation had a meeting in which they agreed to contribute annually a certain sum towards the support of the Chapel and their Pastor; which including my mite amounts to £27 2*s*.0*d*. Mr Conway for his share finds board and lodgings for Mr Cahill. A collection is also made every Sunday on a plate . . . for the relief of the poor.
> . . . Your Lordship will be pleased to observe, that in promising your protection to what was then in agitation, you added, that you could not contribute, in raising money, towards its support, at least for some time. How is it to be supported, save only by the exertions of the Portsmouth Catholics . . . neither are you called upon to contribute money to this new foundation (though I doubt not that you would do so were it in your power): you are only requested to countenance and protect it.[20]

Southworth's mite was £5 that he promised to give Cahill per annum for the next three years, as long as the establishment in Portsea continued.[21] He was giving this from his own salary because Mr Cahill was taking over

from him responsibility for the Catholic prisoners in Fort Cumberland. So, in the new Portsea Mission's case, there were no other sources of funds other than from the committee, not even from the Bishop.

Southworth's letter of 1792 also shows quite clearly that the Mission had been established and that the first legal post-Reformation Mass must have been said in Portsea sometime just before Christmas 1791.

> . . . Upwards of 150 have been with him [Cahill] during the Xtmass indulgence, several of whom had not been to their duty for several years before, and several never seen or known before.[22]

The First Chapel

Exactly where that Mass was said is unknown. The 1796 *Laity Directory* indicated that

> . . . Portsea the Chapel is at 2 Unicorn Row, and is supported by subscriptions and legacies by will.[23]

The Portsea Mission is not mentioned again in the Directory till 1807, when it is given as being in Prince George Street, Portsea, under the Rectorship of Revd F. de la Rue.[24] This Chapel was opened in early 1796,[25] so the above entry refers to the place where Mass was said before 1796. However, it has not been possible to establish for certain if, in 1791, 2 Unicorn Row was the actual place where the first Masses for the Portsea Catholics were celebrated. The property was a small Georgian house[26] and therefore unlikely to have accommodated the 150 congregation, mentioned above, who attended 1791 Christmas celebrations; or the 60 to 70 regular attenders mentioned by Southworth in 1792.[27] The house may have become the Mass centre later, but even so the criticism of size would still apply. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the owners of the property were Catholics;[28] and it seems unlikely that, at that time, a Chapel would have been set up in the house of a Non-Catholic. Misprints were frequent in the *Laity Directory* so it is possible that some part of the entry, most probably the house number, was incorrect. The large scale map[29] shows house number 5 had a reasonably sized building at the rear that could have served as a small Chapel; also this had a rear entrance approached by a passage from Lennox Row.

The Early Congregation at Portsea

The growing threat of war with France and naval growth in the early 1790s made Portsea a place where many people came to seek employment. Some of these would have been Catholic, many Irish and the majority poor.[30] For this reason, the members of the Catholic congregation of Portsea found it difficult to raise enough money to support a Mission. They had to rely primarily on the few Catholic tradesmen of the towns, some of whom may be identified from such sources as directories and letters. The principal leader of the group was Tobias Conway who initially discussed establishing the Mission in Portsea with the Bishop and Gosport's Mission Rector, John Marsland.[31] Conway, a linen draper in Wickham Street, Portsea,[32] gave free lodgings to the first priest, the Revd Cahill.[33] William Holt, another important member, a market gardener[34] involved in supplying the fleet with vegetables,[35] appears to have been a man of some substance. Eventually Holt was to take over the whole debt on the Mission. Holt's son-in-law, John Knapp, a tailor of Queen's Street[36] was also involved, and it was his uncle, Joseph Knapp, who became the second priest to serve at Portsea. Other members of the group included John Young a Queen Street builder,[37] who in 1796 built the permanent Chapel in Prince George Street, George Reeks[38] a victualler and William Reeks, who was First Clerk at the Dockyard Victualling Office.[39] These were the men who undertook the burden of establishing and supporting financially a new Mission in Portsea. A passage in a letter from Southworth in February 1792 indicates how determined these men were to keep the Mission going

> Mr Young I have not seen. I know he is happy hearing prayers on week-days; which business would not permit him to do before. Mr Cahill . . .. I wish him to stay in Portsmouth . . . were he to go away . . .. Mr Conway would not rest till he got another.[40]

From the start the lack of money was to be a major difficulty for the Mission. The first problem that arose was the tension that developed between the Revd Marsland, Mission Rector of Gosport, and Tobias Conway because the former feared that Gosport funds would be seriously eroded by Portsea Catholics transferring their allegiance to the new Mission on their side of the Harbour. The Bishop asked Southworth to investigate the antagonisms[41] that had developed between the Gosport and Portsea Catholics. In his report back Southworth stated

> . . . the whole difficulty lies in Mr Marsland suffering some diminution of money he has received these last two years past. And yet he is much eased thereby in point of labour and expence, as Mr Cahill will (besides attending the prisoners at Cumberland Fort, and Kingstown poor house) answer every call on this side of the water.[42]

Eventually Southworth brought the parties to a recon-

ciliation. In a letter to Bishop Douglas, written in April 1792, he stated

> Mr Marsland and Mr Conway were some weeks ago happily reconciled, at a meeting in this neighbourhood . . .. The former drank success to Portsmouth, the latter to Gosport; the rest of the company success to both. Also as a pledge of goodwill, Mr Marsland gave down on the spot 5 guineas he promised to the new Chapel; Mr Conway on his side gave Mr Marsland the £8. I am happy to find a good understanding continues between them.[43]

While the Portsea Mission was being established the French Revolution was in full swing. By 1796 there were 12,150 French refugees in England. About 50% were Catholic clergy,[44] the largest number of whom left France between August 1792 and March 1793, expelled because they refused to accept the new order for the Gallican Church voted by the French Revolutionary Government in July 1790. The French authorities gave them little time for leisurely departure, so that many arrived in England in near destitute condition. An emigrant relief committee was established, largely financed by the British Government, to look after their needs and find them a place to stay. This committee, mainly non-Catholic, appealed for funds, and Portsmouth contributed £84 12*s*.0*d*.[45] Many of the refugee priests were housed for a time in Gosport at Forton.[46] Richard Southworth writing to the Bishop in September 1792 tells him about visiting these exiles, who had come over in great numbers to Portsmouth and Gosport, and were seeking permission to say Mass and hear each others confessions. He gave them 'permission in compassion to their distress and hurry of their arriving every moment'. He also stated that both Cahill and Marsland were involved in assisting them.[47] Eventually about 680 were sent to King's House, Winchester, where they remained till about 1795.[48] Most of these refugee priests went back to France, but a few of them stayed and took up pastoral work amongst English Catholics. One of them, the Revd François de la Rue, was to become the Mission Rector of Portsea in 1806.[49]

Building a Permanent Chapel

Sometime in 1794 John Cahill left Portsea. In a letter to the Bishop, dated 31 December 1793,[50] Southworth says that he had renewed Cahill's faculties but, at the same time, indicated that there was a problem that would require the Bishop's attention. None of the registers kept by Cahill has survived. The earliest registration made at the Portsea Mission is a baptism dated 1 December 1794 and is signed by the Revd Joseph Knapp, who had by then taken over as the Rector.[51]

In the Diocese of Westminster archives there are several letters written by Knapp to the Bishop. The first, dated 2 January 1795, was a report of the situation that he found in Portsea when he arrived; and indicated that he had already been in Portsea for some while

> According to your wishes I came to Portsea at the time appointed, but being so unsettled I feared writing till I could give some account of our proceedings.[52]

At first Joseph Knapp stayed with his nephew, John Knapp, in Queen's Street, Portsea. But, probably because he did not have enough privacy to see congregation members, he moved within a short time to lodgings in Havant Street, Portsea. Because it cost more than the congregation allowed him, however, he soon moved to more modest accommodation in Butcher Street.[53] At this time he was probably saying Mass at the Unicorn Street Chapel, but in a letter to the Bishop written on New Year's Eve 1795 he stated

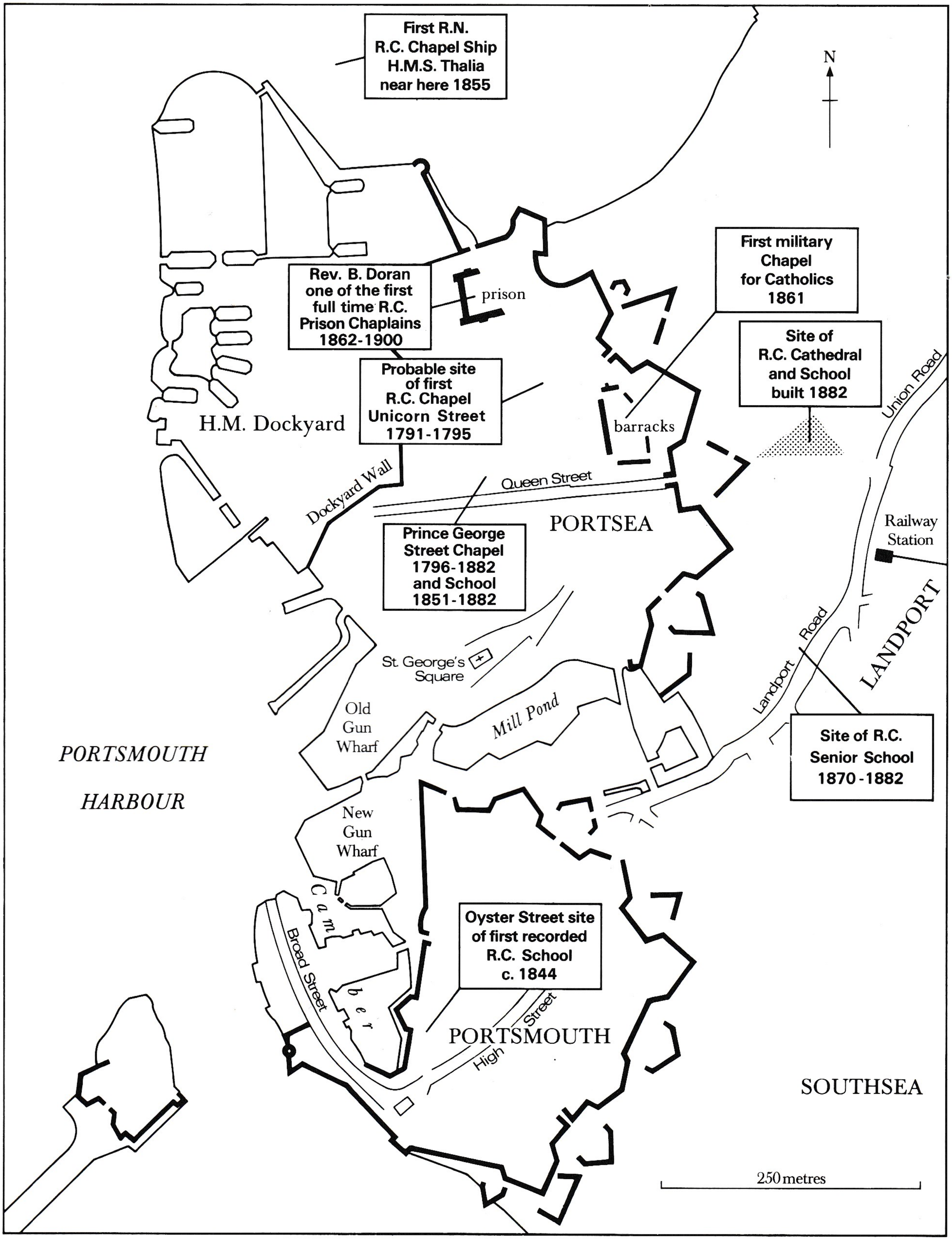
> I am at last got into my new house but I have not yet opened the Chapel, it will I believe be soon finished, I am in hopes of a fortnight or three weeks to open it.[54]

So, the new Chapel, to replace the temporary Mass centre set up in 1791, was opened in mid-January 1796.

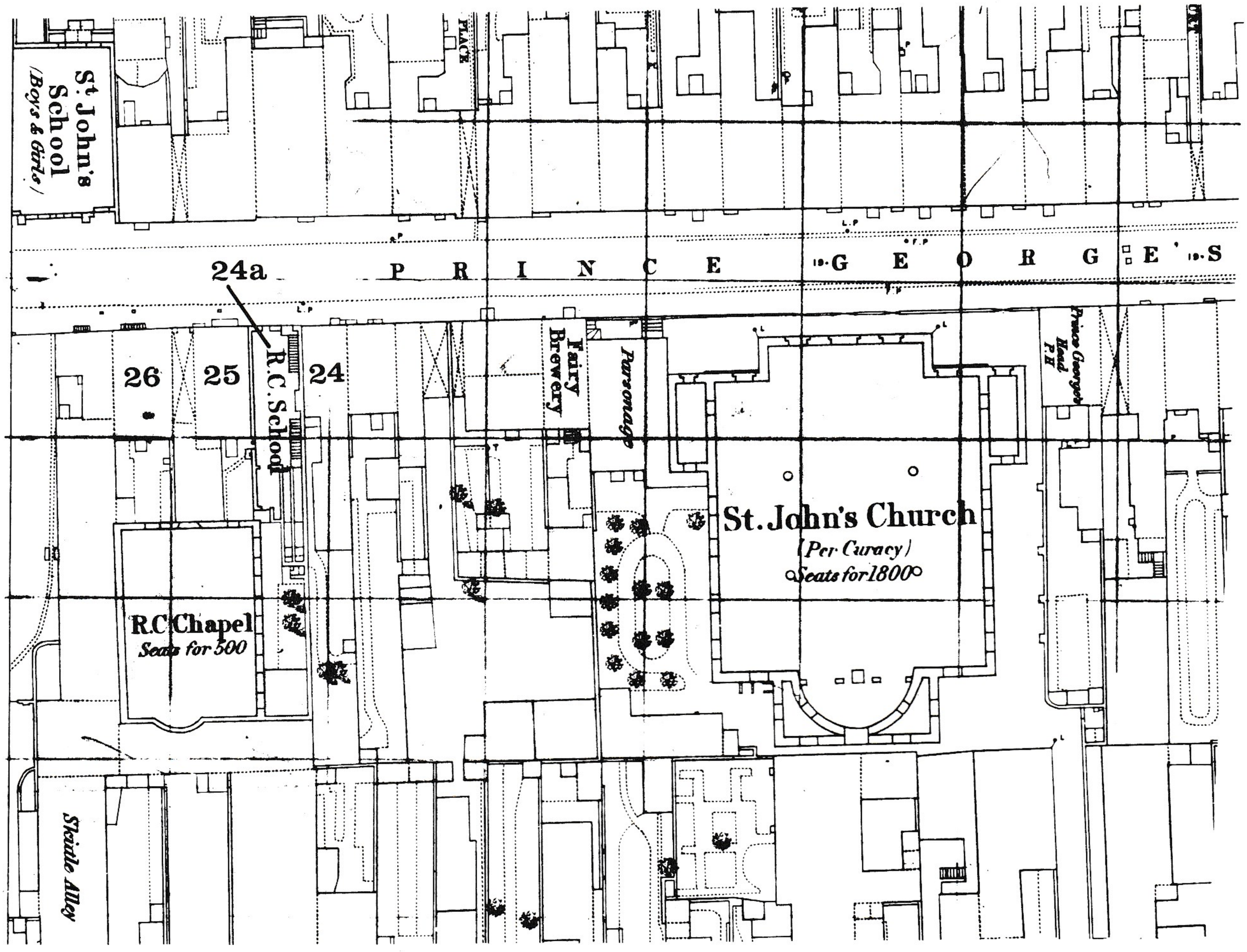
Efforts to establish this new and more permanent Chapel had been started, soon after Knapp arrived, sometime between late 1794 and early in 1795. Knapp, writing to the Bishop on 2 January 1795, stated

> . . . As to the concert room that is quite out of the question, Mr Grigg an attorney has bought the greatest part of it, and his price, was he disposed to part with it, would be too dear for us . . .. Now I have been looking for a convenient place, and have seen three or four places but they ask an exorbitant price, but we are at last come to a determination upon the ground behind my nephew's and all seem agreed that to be most eligible and the cheapest that we can get, we have agreed for it, to give you an exact account of it I shall defer till I have the pleasure of seeing you . . . explain the whole and show the plan which I got Mr Young to draw and give me an estimate for . . . which I shall submit for your consideration.[55]

The fact that they were considering a concert room is an



Places in Portsmouth associated with Roman Catholics, 1791–1882. Map outline based on Jarman's Portsmouth and Portsea, 1866.



indication that having a discreet and secluded site was not uppermost, as has been suggested by some authors.[56] None of the letters dealing with the building of the Chapel mention that there was a need to have a building hidden from public view for fear of anti-papist reaction. The Catholic chapels built about this time in Newport and West Cowes, Isle of Wight, are still in use and may be seen to be well out in the open. The Portsea Chapel needed to be placed where most of the Catholics were living and working, i.e. within the ramparts of Portsea and walking distance of the Dockyard. By this stage the amount of space left for building within the ramparts was limited and the practice was to infill, hence forming the many courtyards that were becoming so characteristic of Portsea.[57] There is also evidence that the local Protestants were not too anti-Catholic. Southworth, in a letter to the Bishop, mentioned that on Sundays the local Protestants occasionally gave something towards the Catholic collection for the relief of the poor.[58] Being a port Portsmouth was fairly cosmopolitan and the inhabitants accustomed to having people of other faiths around them. More importantly, Catholics at the time were a small minority, mostly poor, and so no threat. The indications are that, apart from the occasions when particular political events aroused anti-papist feelings, relations between Protestants and Catholics were probably fairly amicable.[59]

Joseph Knapp's nephew, John Knapp, had a tailor's shop in Queen's Street,[60] and the ground behind his shop would have faced onto Prince George Street. The large scale 1874 Ordnance Survey Map shows the Roman Catholic Chapel with its accompanying houses and school at the western end and on the southern side of Prince George Street. The Poor Rate book of 1796 gives Knapp as the occupier of the site and this is confirmed by his letter to the Bishop quoted above. Pre 1851 documents amongst the deeds for the Chapel and its associated House have not survived, so it is difficult to establish what the land was used for before the Chapel was built. However, by using those Portsea Poor Rate and Gaol Rate books available,[61] it has been possible to demonstrate that the site was probably occupied by some old houses in which poor people dwelt.

In the letter of 31 December 1796 to his Bishop, Knapp states that there was still a considerable amount of money to be collected to pay off the cost of the buildings.

> We have now raised 600 upon the Chapel and premises but we shall still be in arrears unless some good charitable person comes to our assistance. Will you try Mrs Henege we urgently need another £100 to pay the tradesmen.[62]

Mrs Henege was a wealthy widow who lived in the Isle of Wight, and who contributed generously to the building of the Catholic chapels there.[63] How much, if anything, she contributed to Portsea is unclear, but in May 1796

Ordnance Survey map Portsea, 1874, (reduced from 1:500), showing the western end of Prince George Street, including the Roman Catholic Chapel. House number 25 was the priest's residence.

Roman Catholic Chapel at Newport, Isle of Wight, built in 1791. Typical of the type of structure being built at the time for Roman Catholic worship.
Photo: Dominic Fontana, 1988.

Knapp pleaded with the Bishop to prevail on her to come to their assistance because the £600 borrowed had been recalled.[64] The problems over money continued for some time and in September 1796 Knapp complained to the Bishop

> At the winding up of the accounts concerning our building we have been most strangely disappointed and I may say greatly deceived the expenses exceed the estimate above £500 the committee are very exasperated at it but where the fault layes I will not undertake to say, but unless we get very considerable assistance it will be impossible to support it.[65]

Besides the usual causes of the excess final cost over the estimated cost of a new building, some of the increase can

probably be accounted for by contemporary inflation. Finance never ceased to be a problem to the Catholic Church in Portsea. However, the Chapel was built and it survived. It was enlarged in 1851[66] and served its purpose until replaced by the Church in Edinburgh Road, which became the Cathedral of the Roman Catholic diocese of Portsmouth.

When the new Cathedral was opened in 1882 the Chapel was sold for £710 to Kent & Blake, Auctioneers and Estate Agents, who used it for a time as a store-house. Eventually the Agents leased it out and, in 1903, sold it to the leaseholders, a firm of printers, Winterbottom & Sons, for £760. This firm remained in the old Chapel, except for a period during the 1939–45 war when the Admiralty used it, until the place was purchased by the Portsmouth City Council in 1964 for redevelopment.[67] The Chapel was demolished and the site is now occupied by a large store-house.

This Chapel was dedicated to St John the Evangelist, and probably resembled in some degree the two Catholic churches, at Newport and West Cowes. The Church at Cowes was built in the same year and by the same builder, John Young of Portsea, as the Prince George Street Chapel.[68] No photographs taken of the Portsea Chapel when it was in use as a place of Catholic worship have been found. However, it has been possible to form a picture of what it would have looked like by using newspaper reports, large scale ordnance survey maps and photographs taken just prior to its demolition in 1965.[69] From this, and the other evidence, it has been possible to form some idea of what it was like when it was first built in 1796.

A photograph, taken in 1948 and published by the Catholic Record Society,[70] shows the bomb-damaged priest's house at 25 Prince George Street, Portsea, with the archway leading to the passage that went through to the Chapel built behind the house. The building was temporarily repaired and then reoccupied by the printers until 1964. The large scale 1874 Ordnance Survey map[71] shows the layout of the premises as it was whilst it was being used as a Catholic Chapel. It shows the priest's house, number 25, with the passage to the west which leads to a porch leading into the Chapel seating 500 people. The rooms over the passage belonged to number 26, the neighbour to the west, and had nothing to do with the Chapel. Number 24a, next-door to the east, was purchased by the congregation in 1851[72] and became the Catholic School. The purchase of this property made it possible to enlarge the Chapel. The off-centre apse in the south wall indicates how this was done, i.e. by widening the Chapel by about 8 feet to the east. There were windows to the east and north, but

Left house of pair, number 25, was the Roman Catholic priest's house in Prince George Street, Portsea, from 1796 until 1882. Picture taken just prior to demolition in 1965. The roof had been temporarily repaired after bomb damage in 1940s. Arched doorway in centre led to chapel behind the two houses. Building to left was a Roman Catholic school from c 1851 until 1882.
Photo: E. Houldsworth.

View of east side of Roman Catholic Chapel, Prince George Street, Portsea. Picture taken in 1965 after buildings to east had been demolished. The roof with sky-light of the original Georgian building may be seen projecting up behind the roof of slates placed over the extension built in 1851.
Photo: E. Houldsworth.

not to the south, where it backed onto the rear-yards of the Queen's Street premises, or to the west where it abutted onto a bacon factory. The roof had a double gable; the larger roof was made of Georgian tiles, had a sky-light in it and covered the pre-1851 part of the building, whilst the smaller was made of slate and covered the 1851 extension. The porch was continuous with the passage-way and was covered in slate, so therefore most likely dates from 1851. Before 1851 there was probably only an open Georgian porch similar to the ones seen on the Newport and Cowes Churches.

Inside, the Chapel was about 25 feet high and had a barrel ceiling with the sky-light set near its centre. There was a balcony reached by a wooden stairway situated in the porch outside the northern end of the Chapel. The balcony extended around three sides of the building, and was approached by a door in the northern wall. A study of the arrangement and types of pillars supporting this balcony, indicate that before 1851 it probably consisted of only a single span across the back of the Chapel, approached by stairs inside the Chapel; similar to the balcony in the West Cowes Church.[73] Slight in his 1828 *Chronicles of Portsmouth*[74] mentions a neat organ in the gallery of the Catholic Chapel. The sanctuary was probably a slightly raised platform, with the altar set in the centre of the apse. Somewhere over the sanctuary would have been the lighted sanctuary lamp indicating the Catholic faith that Christ is present inside the tabernacle under the form of consecrated hosts (unleavened breads). Over the altar hung a picture of Christ stilling the storm on the

sea of Gallilee, painted by Sir Robert Ker Porter and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1796. This picture is the only remaining item that certainly came from the old Chapel, and at present hangs in the Cathedral Sacristy in Edinburgh Road. On either side of the apse there were niches for statues, probably of St John, patron of the Chapel, and St Joseph, patron of the Deanery. In the south east corner of the Chapel was a door to the Sacristy, a small lean-to out-building, where the priest vested and prepared for services. The font was probably at the back of the Chapel, and near the alter there was a pulpit.[75] One item of which there is a detailed description is the confessional. An account in the *Hampshire Telegraph* reporting an anti-Papist meeting in Portsea in March 1870, includes a description of the confessional and its use, by a man challenging the speaker.

> If they went to confession in Prince George Street . . . they would find it on the starboard hand . . . the priest was in one box, and there were two others for the penitents, and there was a slide, close to which the priest put his ear to receive the confessions.[76]

From the evidence[77] it may be deduced that the Chapel built by John Young for his fellow Portsea Catholics in 1795-96 was a simple rectangular red brick building, about 50 feet by 30 feet, set in the yard behind two newly-built houses and approached by a passage between these houses. This Chapel was designed to accommodate about 300 people, and looked much like many of the Non-Conformist Chapels built about that time. This is not surprising because, first it was a simple structure and therefore relatively cheap to build, and secondly Catholics were forbidden to have steeples and bells by the 1791 Relief Act.[78] However some Catholics were opposed to this style of building, feeling that it was not in keeping with the solemn dignity of the Catholic Liturgy, nor expressed the confidence of a Church emerging from years of persecution. John Milner, Mission Rector at Winchester, later to become a Bishop, wrote to the Vicar Apostolic of the London District, Bishop Douglas, in March 1792 stating

> I have always resolved never to consent where I could avoid it to the erection of any of those Methodist meeting houses which are now usually built in London and elsewhere for Cath[oli]c Chapels.[79]

The services[80] held in this Chapel would have been similar to the services familiar to Catholics before the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), the most important being the Roman rite Tridentine Mass said in Latin with the Priest

Inside former Roman Catholic Chapel, Prince George Street, Portsea. Picture taken just prior to demolition in 1965, looking towards north-east corner of balcony. The balcony had been widened when building was used as a printing works. Main entrance may be seen below balcony at rear of chapel.
Photo: E. Houldsworth.

facing the Altar with his back to the congregation. One of the Sunday and Feast-day Masses was probably sung and accompanied by music. The priest and any one else receiving communion would have been fasting from midnight the night before. The number of the congregation receiving communion would have been small, most lay people receiving communion only at the major festivals. Confessions and baptisms were by private arrangement, and this would have applied to marriages as well. At the time, until the Marriage Act of 1836,[81] Catholics had to be married in the local Anglican church for their union to be legally recognised. Usually the Anglican Church marriage was performed first and then followed by a, (strictly illegal), ceremony in the Catholic Chapel.[82] As for the dead, most would have been buried in the local parish church-yard, after the appropriate fee had been paid to the Anglican incumbent.[83] Graves of Catholics have been identified in the grave-yards of St Thomas's, Portsmouth, St Mary's, Portsea and at St Mary's Portchester.[84] Some, mostly the better-off, were buried in the Catholic Cemetery at Winchester.[85] The earliest entry in the *Laity Directory* giving details of services is in 1807

> Portsea: Prince George Street, Revd F. de la Rue, Morning Office, Sundays 11 o'clock, with instruction after Gospel. Vespers 3 o'clock.[86]

The term 'Morning Office', like saying 'going to prayers', was a euphemism for Mass. At this time it was still felt that the term 'Mass' was a provocative word to the English Protestants, and so avoided. Instruction refers to the Sermon and Vespers is the mediaeval form of evensong.

Money Difficulties in the Early Days

After the building of the Chapel Joseph Knapp remained Mission Rector until 1799. During this period, and for long afterwards, Portsea was not a very salubrious place to live[87] and, not surprisingly, Knapp's letters to his Bishop indicate that he was reluctant to remain. In 1799 he wrote asking to be allowed to resign

> I am much obliged to you for your last letter wherein you say you will release me as soon as can be done with propriety and safe conscience . . .. You know my Lord it was with great reluctance and to comply with your desire that I undertook this mission. . ..[88]

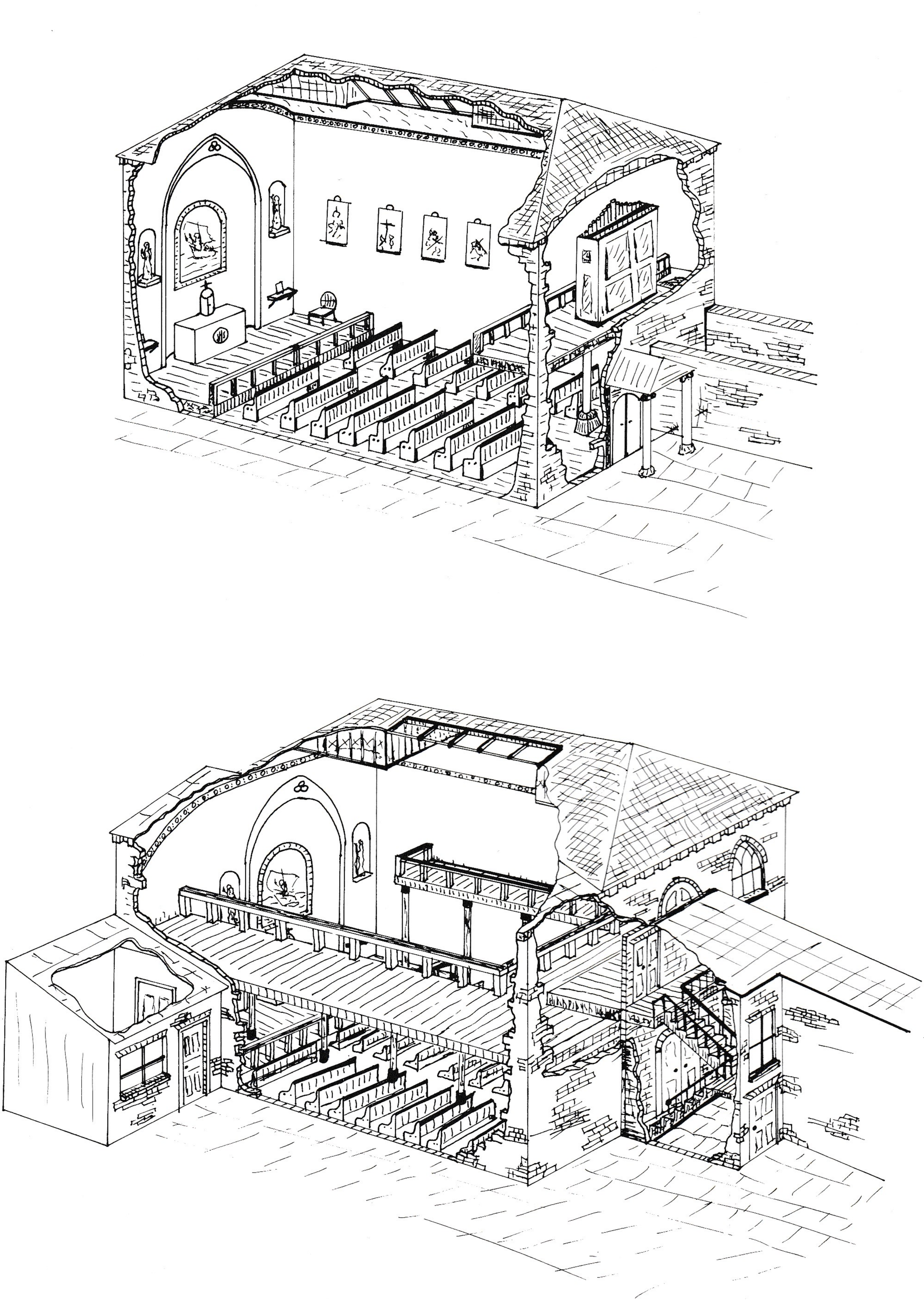
In this same letter he complained that he was hundreds out of pocket and that his own fortune had been reduced by some fifteen pounds per annum, because he had contributed towards the building of the new Chapel and Priest's House.[89] Knapp, who was nearly fifty years old when he came to Portsea, was a gentleman of independent means with property in Blendworth, Hampshire; and Portsea appears to have been the first and only Mission where he acted as Rector.[90] He must have been a priest in the old mould coming from a monied background so that, after his ordination in 1775, he would have expected to serve a Catholic congregation from the house of one of the Catholic gentry. For English Catholics, however the late eighteenth century was a time of change. Urban congregations were increasing, and the clergy were needed in the towns.[91] Probably Knapp agreed to serve Portsea because he appreciated the Bishop's difficulties and because of his local family connections; his brother, James, lived at Langstone and his nephew, John, was a leading member of the Portsea congregation. Despite his reluctance, his five years at Portsea were ones of achievement. He helped the congregation to raise enough money to build the Chapel and house in Prince George Street, as well as contributing himself to the cost.[92] The fact that he made only minimal demands on the congregation for his personal needs was probably a major factor in enabling enough money to be raised to get the building started. In August 1799 he told the Bishop

> . . . I have served it almost these five years without being a burthen to your Lordship and should be happy to assist in the support of a missionary if it were in my power, but it is only by strict economy for these three years past I have been able to support myself . . ..[93]

Probably the severe inflation of the period was biting into his private income.

There is an indication in one letter that Knapp started a school for poor children,[94] but no other record of this has survived and there is no other mention in the records of a Catholic School in Portsea till the 1840s. Knapp also became involved in looking after the pastoral needs of the French prisoners of war in the area, after a suspicious, security-conscious Portsmouth mayor had forced the exiled French clergy serving them to leave the district.[95]

By 24 October 1799 Knapp had left Portsea, moving to live with his brother James at Langstone, where he helped the Brockhampton Mission by frequently saying Mass.[96] At this time there was no priest at Portsea and, as Marsland, the Gosport priest, was ill, it seems unlikely that he crossed the harbour to say Mass for the Portsea congregation.[97] Probably the French priest, Jean Pestel, who was living and helping at the Gosport Mission, came over.[98] Pestel must have been the priest of whom Knapp commented



Artist's impression of inside of Roman Catholic Chapel, Prince George Street, Portsea, 1796–1850.

Artistic impression of inside of Roman Catholic Chapel, Prince George Street, Portsea, 1851–1882.

> . . . as to a Frenchman . . . he could say Mass, Mr Petel (sic) does not speak English sufficiently to be understood . . .. I hope you will never think of having a Frenchman here.[99]

Knapp's successor at Portsea was Thomas Gabb, a Londoner, who, until then, had been Rector at Cowes. He was recommended by Southworth because he was a man with considerable pastoral experience, especially among the Irish, having worked for a considerable time at St Patrick's, Soho, London[100]

> . . . he has been much amongst the Irish and would know how to deal with them . . . and such these are in great number in Portsea.[101]

Southworth pointed out that in such a pastor the Irish would have confidence, and many would come forward to support him, the Chapel and its needs. There is plenty of evidence to indicate that many of the Irish who came to England to find work did not automatically go to the nearest Catholic Church to practise their faith. They had to be brought in.[102] It was also likely that the Irish in Portsea met some prejudice from the English Catholics in the congregation.[103] Knapp hints at the problem when he informed the Bishop '. . . Irish, they seem to come in and I hope with time to bring them to reason.'[104]

Knapp's last entry in the baptismal register is dated 22 August 1799,[105] and Gabb's first entry is 24 December 1799. Correspondence concerning Portsea between these two dates indicates that there was some doubt about continuing the Mission, principally because of the shortage of priests, let alone anyone willing to serve in a place[106] where, besides ill health, the congregation were poor and unable to afford sufficient money to support a Mission. Southworth commented that Portsea was one of the largest congregations in the London District, with over 200 Catholics. He thought that Knapp's leaving might be a good thing for the congregation, since it would compel them to exert themselves more in finding money for the Mission, instead of relying on the generosity of their financially independent pastor.[107]

When the Bishop approached Gabb to take on the Portsea Mission, Gabb replied that, if the Bishop insisted, he would obey and go. But he added that he had been in Knapp's confidence and therefore knew something of the poor, laborious and perplexing Portsea Mission. Consequently he felt that he should not be expected to go there without some direct financial support from the Bishop himself. It was not until after he arrived in Portsea, however that the Bishop agreed to pay a regular allowance.[108]

Gabb arrived in Portsea on 12 November 1799, using £5 given him by Mr Holt to cover his removal expenses from Cowes.[109] Two weeks later he wrote to the Bishop[110] complaining that prospects were very discouraging, and that the congregation leaders were avoiding discussing the need to increase their contribution for the support of their pastor. They were arguing that the good price they paid for their seats (pew rent) should be enough and was as much as they could afford. Gabb pointed out that this money was just sufficient to pay the interest on the Chapel £1,200 debt, and left little to support himself. He went on to tell the Bishop that several of the better-off members of the congregation had left Portsea recently and that no one had come in to replace them. He mentioned Mr Holt, Mr Young, and Mr Duff, but not Mr Conway who appears to have left Portsea by this time.[111] He stated that Young and Duff were in some financial difficulties, so that Mr Holt had taken on the sole responsibility for the Chapel debt. In the end the Bishop agreed to pay Gabb £40 per annum as from Christmas 1799. Even so, at the end of November, Gabb had to ask the Bishop for an advance to tide him over till Christmas.[112] On 4 December Gabb acknowledged £5 advance from the Bishop[113] and, in the same letter, pointed out that the sum of £40 per annum was similar to the sum allowed Gosport; but, unlike Gosport, Portsea had no legacies to supplement it.

Thomas Gabb stayed at Portsea till August 1803,[114] when he moved to the Duke of Norfolk's seat at Worksop, Notts, remaining there till his death in 1817. His obituary in the 1818 *Laity Directory* stated

> No less distinguished for the excellence of his catechetical discourses than for a most pastoral attention to the numerous poor.[115]

It went on to acknowledge his learned writings on the architecture of the Temple of Solomon and the Pyramids of Giza.

The French Priest

After Gabb left Portsea the Mission was without a priest between August 1803 and February 1806. The congregation feared that the Bishop would close the Chapel and sell it off, compelling them to cross the harbour again if they wanted to hear Mass or receive the Sacraments. At the instigation of his father-in-law Holt, John Knapp, by now living in Bath, wrote to the Bishop in December 1803, to plead for the retention of the Portsea Mission.[116] He argued that if a choice had to be made between closing Gosport or Portsea, then Gosport should be closed because Portsea had the bigger congregation with the larger and more modern Chapel. He pointed out that if the Chapel were closed the debt interest would still have to be

Painting of Christ stilling storm on Sea of Gallilee by Sir Robert Ker-Porter, painted in 1796, now in Roman Catholic Cathedral Sacristy, Edinburgh Road. Formerly altar piece in Prince George Street Chapel.
Photo: Dominic Fontana.

paid, so the Chapel would have to be sold and probably converted to irreligious use. Finally he wrote of the Portsea Catholics

> . . . many are forgetting their religion and others unable to surmount the difficulties of crossing the water so that an average congregation of 150 usually assembled in Prince George Street I am told that not 20 make their appearance at Gosport.[117]

In 1803 there were less than 300 priests available to serve all English Catholic Missions.[118] This was probably why the Bishop was finding it difficult to find a priest for Portsea. In the end he appointed one of the small number of French exiled clergy who remained in England to work amongst the British Catholics. The Abbé Francois Delarue, sometimes known as Francis Street, started working at the Portsea Mission in about February 1806.[119] Born in the Calvados region of France in 1762 and exiled to England in 1792, he arrived in Portsmouth and resided for a time in Bishop Street, Portsea.[120] There is little further information about him till 1806, but he must have been a man of some courage and character. It was probably difficult for a Frenchman, albeit a Royalist, to take on a Mission for Catholics in England's premier naval port just four months after Trafalgar. It could be argued that this shows just how desperate the Bishop was.

Delarue served the Portsea Mission till he died, in harness, in May 1827. During the last twelve years of his life he also looked after the Gosport Mission.[121] Throughout this period the shortage of money was a continual problem, and at one point in 1807 Bishop Douglas wrote to his coadjutor Bishop, William Poynter, that

> There is much to apprehend that the Mission at Portsea must be abandoned after all the trouble we have taken to support it . . . The present inhabitants cannot find ways and means of paying the interest on the mortgage and maintaining a priest.[122]

However, the Mission did not close, and Delarue ensured a regular Portsea entry in the *Laity Directory* from 1807 onwards.[123]

In a letter to the Bishop in 1819[124] Delarue mentioned a French priest, living at Gosport, a Mr le Marchand. This priest had probably been saying Masses there, so saving Delarue the need to cross over on Sunday mornings to say a Mass in Gosport in addition to that said in Portsea. But because his English was inadequate le Marchand left the administration of the Gosport Mission to Delarue. However, in 1819 this priest had to be removed, because he had refused a request from the English Catholic Bishops to sign a declaration of loyalty to Pope Pius VII.[125] From this time onwards Delarue was running the two Missions on his own.

Two letters from Delarue to the Bishop have survived and they are both beautifully written and in reasonable grammar. While the second, written in 1819, deals with the problem of Mr le Marchand, the first, written in October 1814, reported on the Portsea Mission.

> . . . it is well known that there is no income attached to this place, except what you allow me per annum. we have a plate at the door, but the people who attend the Chapel are all poor, consequently the money arising from it is scarcely worth mentioning. out of your allowance and the small collection received at the door, I pay £30 annually to Mr Knapp for the mortgage laid on my Chapel yearly etc. I merely live on my industry bona Castrensia teaching in my leisure hours etc. the number of people attached to this congregation, as a sea port, varies very much: at present there are in the Towns of Portsmouth and Portsea near a thouzand souls Catholic but they are all poor people who have come here to seek a living . . . there is no noble or single Genteel Family Catholic in the towns they are all tradesmen seeking their livelyhood and in so doing neglect their children and their Christian duty. There is however a number of three hundred souls attending their Chapel every Sunday; and about one hundred pious people who receive the blessed Communion at Easter regularly and at several times in the year at the time of indulgence.[126]

Delarue looked after a wide area which included all Portsea Island and out as far as Portchester.[127] There was no school for Catholics and this worried him because the Catholic children who went to school had to go to the Methodist one and, as he put it, '. . . lost the sweet of their religion',[128] He also complained about the lack of attendance at Catechism classes on Sundays, because the people were too busy selling goods on board the ships at Spithead. W. Gates, stated that the French Catholic priest was something of a figure in the town and taught French to many people who paid him in kind. The Abbé hoarded these things, hoping to accumulate enough money to build a new Church. Unfortunately, he died intestate and some people came over from France claiming to be his relatives and entitled to the items, which they proceeded to consume in drink and other amusements before returning to France.[129]

Francois Delarue is buried in St James's Catholic Cemetery in Winchester, where his tombstone has a Latin inscription; which translates[130]

Here lies the body of
Francis Delarue
of the Diocese of Bayeux
Exceptional priest
Of the Christian Religion
Expelled because of savage persecution
from France
Took refuge in England
There in the year 1806 and
For the rest of his life
Cared for the faithful of Portsea
Portsmouth and Gosport
Dwelling there as a pious and fervid
Soul dedicted to them
Died at Portsea on the 25th day of May
AD 1827 aged 67
RIP.

The tombstone was erected by the congregations he had served and shows that he was well loved and respected. It may be said that, through his efforts and perseverance, he put the Roman Catholic Church in Portsea on a firm foundation. He did this, not by trying anything ambitious, but by living simply and within his means, in order to ensure that the Mission survived over a most difficult period of its life. Never again was there to be any question of closing the Portsea Mission, even though financial shortages and its congregation's poverty remained serious problems.

Emancipation

Two years after Delarue died, the 1829 Act of Catholic Emancipation[131] was passed, releasing English Catholics from the majority of disabilities under which they lived. It now became possible for Catholics to take an active part in the political and civic life of the State and Borough. Surviving records indicate that the Catholics of the Portsmouth area did not become much involved in local affairs until towards the end of the nineteenth century. However, they did become gradually more public in their activities, as may be seen by the increasing number of reports of their affairs appearing in the local newspapers during the middle years of the century.[132]

The period leading up to the passing of the 1829 Act was a time of very active national debate. Newspapers contained many letters and reports about the proposed emancipation. The *Hampshire Telegraph* reported fully an open-air meeting held in February 1829 in St George's Square, Portsea. The meeting, originaly advertised for the Beneficial Hall, had to be transferred to the Square because of the large numbers wanting to attend. It was reported as being moderate, orderly and allowing many different opinions, concerning the forthcoming Act, to be expressed.[133] The report indicates that most people were at first in favour, but as the meeting progressed speeches aroused the old fears and prejudices. Thus it was suggested that Catholics were free enough as it was and allowing them to take part in political life would endanger '. . . the safety of a people whose institutions are all together Protestant', and affect an Englishman's right to think for himself. Several speeches in support of emancipation were made, more than one speaker making the point that Protestant and Roman Catholic soldiers had fought and suffered side by side in the recent wars. The Baptist Minister of Portsea, the Revd Mr Morris, said

> I support Catholic Emancipation because it is just, necessary, political and scriptural and because it is in perfect harmony with the Gospel.[134]

This interjection illustrates the point, made by some authorities, that Catholics and Non-Conformists were on the same side with respect to the government and emancipation.[135]

The meeting culminated in the passing of a vote against emancipation, and resulted in a petition being sent to Parliament opposing the proposed Act. However, the Corporation took the opposite view and sent a separate petition expressing support for the emancipation of Catholics.[136]

The Mission Rector at the time of emanciption, and Delarue's successor, was John Welsh, who remained in Portsea till 1840.[137] Few local records survive for this period, so it is difficult to assess the immediate effect of emancipation on the local Catholic congregation. Such as there are indicate that the baptismal and Easter communicant figures increased little during Welch's incumbency.[138] The entries under Portsea in the *Laity Directory*, and after 1837, in the *Catholic Directory*, indicate one Mass on Sundays and Holydays, with Vespers in the afternoon. In 1837 a note is added to the effect that the Chapel was licensed for marriages in accordance with the Marriage Act of 1836. Welch remained on his own as Rector until 1838, when an assistant priest, the Revd James Doyle,[139] joined him. Doyle did not remain long in Portsea and was soon replaced by the Revd Peter Perry.[140] The appointment of an assistant priest does indicate that the size of the congregation was increasing.

Increase in Work Pressure on the Priests

In a questionnaire, filled in for his Bishop in 1837,[141] Welch gave the number of souls in the Portsea congregation as 2,190. This number probably included armed service personnel because Bishop Griffiths, Vicar Apostolic

of the London District 1833–47, specifically recorded the Civilian congregation in 1842 as being only 1,300.[142] Also, Welch mentioned that he made special arrangements for the soldiers, their wives and children, the earliest record of this being done for the Portsmouth garrison.

During 1836–45 the Portsea registers show a number of baptisms of children of exiled Poles. They were baptised by the Polish Chaplain, the Revd Stanislaus Brezezinski, and most of the maiden names of the mothers are British.[143] These were the children of Polish soldiers who settled in Portsmouth, and married British women, after the failure of the uprising against Tsarist rule in 1830–31. They were the remains of a group that had been on their way to America from Prussia when their ship was forced into Portsmouth by a storm in early 1834. At this point they decided that they preferred to remain in Europe to be near their compatriots in Poland.[144]

At the end of October 1840 Welch left Portsea and moved to Weybridge, remaining there until his death in 1850.[145] Peter Perry, the assistant priest, succeeded as Mission Rector and remained in Portsea till July 1842.[146] The registers show that Perry did not himself have an assistant priest to help,[147] but the *Catholic Directory* entry for Portsea in 1842[148] shows that he was tackling his task enthusiastically and energetically, saying twice the number of Masses his predecessor said. Why he left so soon after assuming the Rectorship, and where he went, is unknown. There is evidence in the records indicating that there was a problem causing the Bishop to ask him to leave and replace him with a very exprienced priest.[149]

The Revd Ignatius Collingridge took over the Portsea Mission in July 1842.[150] Though he stayed only a few years, the surviving records indicate that he had a considerable impact. In particular, he was responsible for establishing the first Catholic School on Portsea Island. The 1844 *Catholic Directory* includes the following entry under Portsea

> Aided liberally by the Bishop of the district, the pastor has purchased a capacious school, towards furnishing and supporting which he will be grateful for any contribution.[151]

This school was situated in Oyster Street, Old Portsmouth.[152] In addition, he started raising subscriptions for building a new Church for the congregation. However, later records show that this money was used in 1851 to help purchase number 24a Prince George Street, Portsea, to house a school and make possible the Chapel enlargement.[153]

When Collingridge left Portsea in November 1845 he was presented by the congregation with a chalice as a memorial of their affection and regard.[154] He had achieved a great deal in a very short time. The statistics indicate that the number of practising Catholics in the Portsea congregation was increasing at a very rapid rate; in fact the whole population of the area was rising rapidly at that time; 35.9% between the censuses of 1841 and 1851.[155] It is also likely that the number of educated Catholics in the congregation was increasing over this period, because Messrs Bonny of Butcher Street, Portsea, thought it worthwhile to take on the agency for the intellectual Catholic journal, *The Tablet*.[156] This may also have been associated with the debates and interest in Catholicism aroused by the Oxford Movement, at its peak at that time. All these developments must have caused a number of pastoral and administrative difficulties for the Catholic priests.

After a short time in London Collingridge went to Winchester in 1848, where he remained until shortly before his death in 1889.[157] In Portsea he was succeeded by the Revd George Evision, who remained as Rector until 1848.[158] There are a number of letters in the archives concerning Evison, and they indicate that he was a man of nervous disposition driven beyond his capability.[159] The *Catholic Directory* of 1847 shows that he was doing much work with the military in addition to his normal work at the Chapel, and that he did not have an assistant. There is a note added to the Portsea entry of 1847

> This is a laborious mission, there is a poor school attached without the means of support. On this account the pastor, respectfully, but earnestly appeals to the charity of the Catholic public to aid them with their generous assistance. Subscriptions will be most thankfully received . . .
> A new Church is here greatly wanted. The present Chapel is totally insufficient to accommodate the numerous body of soldiers attached to this garrison.[160]

The Directory next year, 1848, has the following note added

> An appliction was made to the government in 1845 by the Rev. I Collingridge, and again in 1846 by the present pastor, for a site of land to build thereon but without effect. May God in his mercy enlighten some pious individuals to assist the poor soldiers (stricken children of Ireland) who day and night keep watch for the protection of an earthly crown.[161]

During the mid-Victorian period the Portsmouth garrison was large and the Irish formed over 30% of the British

Army.[162] Since many of these Irishmen were Roman Catholics and did not have the use of a specifically Catholic Garrison Chapel on Portsea Island, they were obliged to use the Prince George Street Chapel to the detriment of the civilian part of the congregation.[163] Therefore, there was felt to be an urgent need to find a site to build a Chapel specifically for the use of Roman Catholic soldiers. The response from the military authorities was not very positive in this regard, so the problem persisted. The correspondence indicates that the War Department was unwilling to spend any more money than was necessary on the specific needs of Roman Catholics.[164] The problem was exacerbated by the uneven distribution of Catholics throughout the regiments. Thus a regiment with a high proportion of Catholics, mostly Irish, could suddenly be replaced by a regiment containing a low proportion.[165] This caused rapid fluctuations in the demands made on the priest and facilities available at the Prince George Street Mission. In addition, this was a period when the Catholic Church was faced with a large influx of Irish immigrants, making it a time of severe strain and need to evolve and adapt rapidly.[166]

What was happening to the Roman Catholic sailors, at the time, is unclear as they would not easily have been allowed to come ashore to attend Mass. It is probable that the Catholic priest went out to visit some on their ships.[167] This, however, would have been only at the Captain's invitation and discretion and would have been forthcoming only in exceptional circumstances, such as illness and danger of death. The indications are that, in general, the army tended to be more tolerant towards the Catholics attending their own services than the navy. There were a number of specifically Irish Regiments in the army with a high proportion of Catholics in them, whereas there were no such units in the Navy. So the number of Catholics on any one ship was small, and the Captains were worried that men might use being Catholic as a way of idling or avoiding attendance at the Anglican services conducted on board by himself or his Chaplain.[168]

The tone of the directory entries suggest that Evison was very worried and felt himself under considerable pressure. Not only was he all on his own looking after the pastoral needs of the Catholic civilians and service men in the Portsmouth area, but he was also serving the local convict prison. There is some correspondence with the Bishop, indicating that Evison was becoming very upset about Catholic convicts being compelled to attend Protestant services.[169] The Bishop told him that though he was aware that Catholics in prison were being compelled to attend Protestant services, he thought that it might do them more harm if they were to incur the hostility of the immediate officials in charge by refusing to attend. He asks Evison to draw up a statement, quoting specific cases, that he could show to someone in authority, who could then approach the appropriate minister.[170] There are no records indicating what, if anything, Evison did about this matter.

There is evidence to indicate that, soon after leaving Portsea, Evison had a nervous breakdown, possibly occasioned by the strain of overwork.[171] Locally, he is not heard of again until the *Hampshire Telegraph* report of March 1852, which stated

> Conversion of Romish Priest
>
> On last Sunday evening the Rev. George Evison, late priest of the Church of Rome, renounced the errors of Popery in the Church of St Paul's Bermondsey. The gentleman was late Chaplain of the Roman Catholic congregation at Portsea.[172]

However, later he returned to the Roman Catholic faith. His name reappears again amongst the list of priests in the 1876 *Catholic Directory*, and his obituary appears in the Directory of 1878.

Evison served Portsea in one of its most difficult periods, when the population was growing rapidly, and when the Catholic authorities were not adequately organised to deal with their many pastoral duties to the Catholics living in the Borough – civil, military, naval, prison and educational duties, as well as their duty to the priest serving the Mission.[173]

Growth and Recognition of the Portsea Mission

The arrival of the Revd William Kelly, an Irishman trained at Maynooth, as Mission Rector to Portsea in August 1848[174] marked the beginning of an important phase in the Mission's development. This was associated with the restoration of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy to England in 1850, which gave more freedom of action to the Catholic Bishops. The restoration replaced the old Missionary Districts by dioceses where the bishops had more autonomy, and so could meet particular local needs more efficiently and quickly, than under the old regime.[175] At first this action revived anti-Catholic feelings throughout the country, including Portsmouth. A meeting held in November 1850 in the Beneficial Hall, Portsea, proposed a petition entitled: 'Against the intrusion of the Bishop of Rome upon our Sovereign Rights'.[176] One speaker wanted the Catholic Bishops deported from Spithead to the continent on a ship of war, whilst another wanted the Queen to protest to the Pope against his parcelling out our England into Roman Catholic dioceses. However, things soon quietened down and the activities of the Portsea Mission continued to develop.

Kelly was responsible for some of the major developments at Prince George Street. In April 1851 he purchased number 24a, the property to the East of the Chapel,[177] which he opened as a school. In addition, as has been shown already, having this property made it possible to enlarge the Chapel. The money for all this, £674 for the extension and £140 for number 24a, probably came from the sum collected by himself and previous incumbents, for a new Church.[178] In a letter, written on 1 April 1853 to the first Bishop of Southwark, Thomas Grant, he explained that the enlargement was necessary to accommodate the great increase in the number of military in the Portsea congregation, rather than due to the increase in the number of civilians.[179] The Chapel was not altered again until it was sold.

The records covering Kelly's period at Portsea are mainly concerned with problems relating to the armed forces and the prison. The pastoral care of Catholics in the armed forces was not yet organised on any official basis; and this was not to happen till after the Crimean War, 1854–56. In the meanwhile Bishop Grant had undertaken, on behalf of the Roman Catholics, the task of negotiating with the Government the establishment of a proper Catholic Chaplaincy service for the armed forces and prisons of England.[180] Over this period there are many letters from Kelly to the Bishop, discussing problems concerning the Catholics in the navy, army and prison in the Portsmouth area.[181] These show that he was looking after the pastoral needs of these Catholics while, as he pointed out, he was the only Catholic priest on Portsea Island. The problems concerned such matters as Catholics being made to attend Protestant services, being deprived of Catholic literature, proselytised by the prison schoolmaster and being refused access to a Catholic priest.[182]

Towards the end of his period in Portsea, Kelly's letters to his Bishop seem to indicate that he was under considerable stress and pressure, which was not surprising in view of all that he was expected to do on his own. Kelly left Portsea in October 1853 and moved to the East End of London, where he built the Church of St Mary and St Michael.[183] Writing from London on 18 October 1853 Kelly informed the Bishop,[184] that he had left Portsea on the previous Monday, and that Mr Philips, his successor, would be in residence there by the end of the month. In the meanwhile, Dr Baldacconi, the priest at Gosport, would attend any calls from the Portsea congregation.

Relations with the Wider Community

In the mid-Victorian period the Catholic Mission in Portsea was beginning to become more involved in public life, and this in spite of the short-lived anti-Catholic frenzy associated with the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in 1850. In a letter written from his new Mission in London, William Kelly told Cardinal Wiseman something of his time in Portsea

> . . . during all those years I never got into one single squabble of anything with any of those various authorities. On the contrary during the height of what was then called the Papal Aggression I dined, having my Roman Collar on, at the Naval College in Portsmouth Dockyard with thirty or forty of the Queen's Officers and spent a really pleasant evening amongst them. Among the classes just enumerated men are taught to respect each others feelings.[185]

In the *Hampshire Telegraph* of June 1855[186] there is a report of a Catholic Soirée at which non-Catholic Ministers took part. The evening was dedicated to encouraging wider educational opportunities for all people, regardless of religious or political considerations. In general the line taken by the local newspapers concerning Catholics was one of toleration, while always making the point that they did not agree with the teachings of Catholicism. There were many theological and liturgical aspects of Catholicism that people, at the time, were unhappy about; amongst the less educated there was much misinformation and suspicion. The main problem seemed to be that Catholicism was still seen as being a religion owing some allegiance to a foreign power, the Pope. In general the more educated a lay person was the more tolerant he was likely to be.

> . . . the 'No Popery' tradition of England was actually losing ground within educated opinion . . . Its decline within working classes had still to await the general decline of all religious feelings.[187]

The average lay Catholic held back from becoming involved in controversy and left matters of public relations to the clergy.

There were a number of local incidents, which illustrate the attitude of informed non-Catholic lay opinion towards Roman Catholics. For example, Brent Price writing in 1841[188] about St Mary's Church, recounts an early meeting of the Female Penitentiary Society attended by his sister. She was so upset by the passing of a resolution, proposed by the Anglican clergyman, the Revd Dusantoy,[189] that Roman Catholics should be excluded from the Society's committee, that she did not give in the sovereign she had purposely brought with her to donate to the funds. In January 1857, the local press reported that the local magistrates and police came to the aid of the Catholics.[190] A Protestant enthusiast accosted Catholics arriving and leaving the Chapel in Prince George Street on a Sunday and

tried to thrust anti-Catholic pamphlets onto them. As a consequence a minor disturbance erupted in the street. This, fortunately, was quickly quelled by army officers, who had just brought their Catholic troops to Mass. The matter was reported to the local magistrates, on behalf of the Catholic priest, and they arranged for a police presence in the street on the following Sundays. Subsequent correspondence[191] in the newspaper argued that although one was free to proselytise, the law of the land still secured for every man the right to worship without molestation. On the opposite side this principle was adhered to when, in 1870, magistrates did not approve a Catholic application to bann William Murphy,[192] the well known anti-Catholic speaker, who had caused near riots in some other parts of the country. The meetings took place, the speaker aroused his audience by playing on their suspicions and mistaken notions. Some Catholics did try, by speaking up at the meetings, to defend their faith; though it is reported that they were rather ineffectual.[193] However, there were no reports of riots following the sessions in Portsmouth.

Though the educated lay Non-Catholic attitude was one of toleration of Roman Catholicism, the attitude of the Non-Catholic clergy was very complex, and depended on many factors. The Anglican Low Church wing and the Non-Conformist Churches tended to be active in expressing their opposition to Catholicism, as may be seen from letters and speeches made at public meetings, concerning religion, which were published and reported in the local newspapers at the time.[194] However, the Anglican High Church side tried to be very friendly and occasionally they received a reciprocal response, but only a private one, from the Catholics.[195] In general on the Catholic side, both clergy and laity tended to adopt an isolationist attitude, keeping themselves apart in matters concerned with religion. This may be seen, for example, in correspondence regarding relations between the Catholic clergy and the Protestant Prison Chaplain.[196] One particular incident that well illustrates the Catholic attitude occurred when the French Fleet paid an official visit to Portsmouth in August 1865.[197] Some of the Anglican clergy, in particular the Revd George Nugee of Farlington and the Revd Wilkinson of Holy Trinity, Portsea, wanted the Anglican and Catholic clergy to present a joint address to the French Naval Chaplains, who were Catholics. However, the Catholic clergy refused to join in because they considered that the proposed address contained certain references about unity which were unacceptable. However, there is some evidence that the Catholic Military Chaplain, Revd Donovan, who was friendly with Wilkinson, did visit the French in company with some of the Anglican clergy. Donovan was seen in company with the Anglicans and reported to the Bishop. This resulted in the Bishop writing to the Portsea Mission Rector, Philips, asking him to investigate.[198] He also wrote to the French Chaplain General, Mgr Coquereau, enquiring about what had taken place.[199] Philips played the matter down,[200] while the French Chaplain, though saying that the address was unorthodox and inappropriate, found it difficult to understand what all the fuss was about.[201]

In general terms the Catholic clergy were more adventurous than the Catholic laity in their relationships with public bodies, and clergy of other denominations.[202] Probably, the education of the Catholic laity was not yet sufficiently advanced for them to feel confident, so they left it to the priests to deal with public relationships concerning the Church. After years of proscription and suspicion it was taking a long time for the Catholics to emerge and take their full part in the life of the local community. It must also be noted that a large proportion of the Catholic congregation at that time were poor Irish and therefore more concerned with surviving poverty and with their own Irish nationalism.

Establishment of Service Chaplains

When the Revd Stephen Henry Philips first took over the Portsea Mission in October 1853, he, like his predecessor, had to carry out all the duties of the Mission alone. But relief was on the way, because Bishop Grant's efforts to establish full-time Chaplains for the Catholics in the armed forces were beginning to bear fruit.[203] In 1855 he persuaded the Admiralty to appoint a full-time Naval Chaplain in each of the major ports, at £120 per annum without allowances. These priests were civilians and not commissioned in the Navy, as the Anglican Chaplains were. In addition, they were not to carry out their duties on board ship except in cases of emergency.[204] The Admiralty allocated some redundant ships to act as Roman Catholic Chapel Ships for the sailors, and HMS *Thalia*, a 5th rate built in 1830,[205] was allocated for this task in Portsmouth Harbour. Philips reports in a letter of November 1855 that

> The hulk that is to be fitted up for a Chapel is brought into dock.[206]

The *Thalia* lasted until 1865 when she was broken up and replaced by another old 5th rate, HMS *Melampus* built 1820; this ship lasted till 1886[207] when a shore-based corrugated iron chapel was erected just to the West of the Unicorn Gate entrance to the Dockyard. This Chapel, dedicated to St Camillus, was transferred to a site in Flathouse Road in 1903, where it remained until the 1960s.[208]

Records show that the first Catholic Navy Chaplain in Portsmouth was the Revd H. Clark. In poor health, owing to a sojourn in the East, and consequently unequal to the

task, he did not remain for long.[209] In April 1856 the Revd William Wollett, from Monmouth, took over as Naval Chaplain in Portsmouth,[210] and immediately set about persuading the Protestant Captains to allow Catholic members of their crews to hold their own prayers and absent themselves from Protestant services on board their ships.[211] There had already been a General Memorandum to the Captains from the Commander-in-Chief in December 1855, setting out the details of how Catholic sailors were to be allowed to attend services aboard the *Thalia*.[212]

In June 1858 Bishop Grant obtained agreement from the Government to establish a permanent body of Catholic Army Chaplains. These, unlike the Naval Chaplains, were to have complete equality in rank and salary with their Anglican colleagues.[213] In April 1859 the Revd James Carey was appointed the first Army Chaplain in Portsmouth.[214] However, the army, unlike the navy, did not have their own Chapel, and so had to share the Prince George Street facilities with the civilian congregation.[215] This caused a number of problems. In May 1859, Revd. Carey asked Major General Peel,[216] the Under Secretary for War, that the Revd Mr Philips be paid a modest sum for the extra work his servants have to do cleaning up after the military services in the Prince George Street Chapel. The problem's exact nature may be deduced from a letter written by Philips to Bishop Grant in December 1860, anwering an anonymous complaint about the dirty conditions in the Portsea Chapel that winter.

> . . . he certainly will find, with the late dirty weather and the people that come, dirt after them, and plenty of it, and it is impossible to prevent it, for those who come to the first Mass at 8 o'clock, lay the first layer of it. The second attended by the military to the tune of sometimes 2 or 300 independent of quantity of dirt that they must bring with them, the whole place is soiled by their filthy spitting, and do what one will, one (cannot) prevent it, and from the closeness of the place is filled with steam and heat, it is impossible to have windows opened at this time of the year with the weather we have had, and everything becoms cloudy and dingy, and added to the natural darkness of the place, for want of cross lights, and the shade which the gallery casts around makes everything appear dark and gloomy and dirty. To obviate as much as possible this state of things, a person is always sent round to clean up the place as best they can after the second or rather the third hour for service, but before that arrives, fresh arrivals swarm in, and the place again teems with dirt. Every Monday the place is cleaned out and oftener if required. It is true that I have to find fault with the party who does it, for not looking sufficiently vigilantly after the cob-webs, and in some places the dust. She is an Irish person, and one cannot get them to keep the place like an English person, but I could not help myself, I could get no one else . . . I have taken steps . . . I hope things in future will be much better . . . There is but one remedy, a new Church. I cannot find room for the people who come, and the little ones thicken like bees . . .[217]

Besides the cleaning problem and the need to ensure that the Government paid something towards the Chapel's use, there were some administrative difficulties between Carey and Philips. Carey's work was to some extent limited by the fact that soldiers had to go to Philips for such official Church matters as marriages, baptisms, churchings and obtaining certificates.[218] In spite of this Carey was kept busy saying Mass and hearing confessions for the soldiers and their families, attending the sick in the military hospital and with running a school for the soldiers' children.[219] In addition, even though the Army were reluctant to supply them with transport, the Catholic military Chaplain had to look after the soldiers in Hilsea Barracks and new fortifictions being built along Portsdown Hill.[220] Eventually, in 1861 Carey's successor, the Revd Daniel Donovan, managed to obtain permission to set up a separate Chapel in Anglesea Barracks near Lion Gate in Portsea.[221] However, there were so many Catholic men and their families in the garrison that they still had to use the Prince George Street Chapel in addition.[222] Catholic Marines stationed at Fort Cumberland, for example, would march in quick time, in under an hour, in dress uniform, along the sea front on a Sunday morning for 9 o'clock Mass in Portsea – a distance of over 3 miles.[223]

In October 1862 Philips was relieved of more of his burden in Portsea by the appointment of a permanent full-time prison Chaplain, the Revd Bernard Doran.[224] With the help of Philips and Wollett, Doran organised a Chapel inside Portsea Convict Prison so that inmates could hear Mass and receive moral instruction, as was required by the prison regime in force at the time.[225] Doran ensured that the Catholic convicts had an adequate supply of suitable books in their cells, such as *Poor Man's Catechism* and *The Garden of the Soul*.[226] In addition, he went through the books in the prison library, marking those unsuitable for Catholics. Doran first used the prison's new altar on Christmas Day 1862 when he addressed the prisoners plainly and strongly about the need to comply with prison regulations and avoid complaining. Doran was to remain in this post till the end of the century.[227]

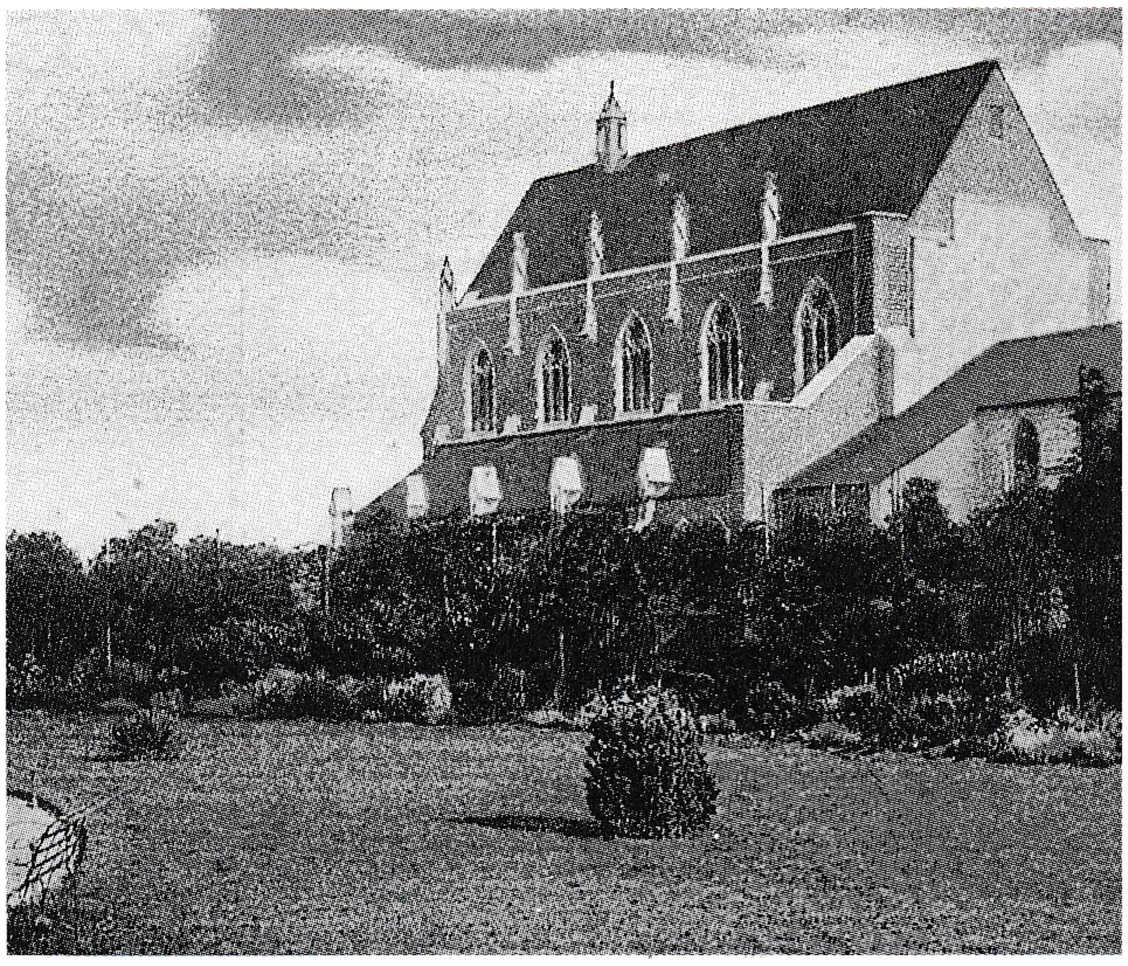
In 1862 there were three priests working on Portsea Island, besides Philips, looking after the needs of all the

Catholics. Philips was in overall charge, running the Deanery, which consisted of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.[228] Thus, Philips was the senior priest responsible for overseeing all the missions in the area. He was consequently a very busy man, not only seeing to the needs of his own Mission, Portsea, but travelling around the Deanery to deal with problems.[229] There is some evidence that Philips suffered poor health,[230] and that this worsened during his stay in Portsea. This may have made him difficult to get on with. Wollett, complaining to the Bishop about Philips being rude to him, says: 'I have avoided giving offence, knowing his character'.[231] Health was probably the reason why the Bishop moved him to a quieter Mission at Ryde in November 1865, and appointed the Revd John Horan to succeed him.[232]

The Building of a New Church & Creation of a New Diocese

The records of Horan's period at Portsea show him to have been a hard-working, dominant and determined man who, from the start, set out to achieve expansion and development. Three main strands run through Horan's incumbency. The first was the encouragement of music in the liturgy at the Prince George Street Chapel. Horan asked the Bishop to send him an assistant priest who could sing and take charge of the choir,[233] as he himself was not a particularly good singer. In 1869 a Mozart Mass was sung in the Chapel, with the help of some members of the English Opera Company then performing at the *Theatre Royal*.[234] In this Mass, Horan only acted as deacon leaving the celebrant's role to his curate Kelleher. On another occasion, in September 1871, Rossini's 'Stabat Mater' was performed in the Chapel, accompanied by the Band of the Royal Marines.[235] Also there are a number of newspaper reports of tea-parties, held by the Catholics in the Beneficial Hall, to raise money for their schools, at which music formed the main entertainment.[236]

Education was the second strand. After the 1870 Education Act, Horan and his curate Connolly played a very active part on the Portsmouth School Board.[237] That education was beginning to have its effect on the Catholic congregation in the 1870s, is illustrated by the opening of a bookshop and newsagent in Portsea that advertised itself as being Catholic. In 1874 Mrs Sarah Fulker's Catholic bookshop was situated at 34 Prince George Street, moving in 1879[238] to 26 Prince George Street, next door to the Chapel.[239] After the building of the Cathedral she moved to 4 Unicorn Road and advertised herself as a newsagent and Catholic Repository,[240] selling all items connected with Catholic worship and devotions, including books. Horan considered the improvement and maintenance of a specifically Catholic education for the children of his congregation to be his most important priority. In the 1870s



there was an infants school at 24a Prince George Street, and a senior school in Spring Gardens, near the *Theatre Royal*.[241] Writing to the Bishop in January 1867, he stated

> I really think that increased school accommodation is an even greater necessity than a new Church.[242]

The new Church was the third strand to Horan's incumbency. He devoted much energy and time to the task of collecting enough money, and finding a suitable site for a grand Church capable of expressing the new confidence that Catholics were beginning to feel. In fact, the building of this Church, together with a new school on the same site.[243] were to be Horan's main achievements. He built the school first and then the first phase of the new Church, which was opened in 1882. This Church immediately became the Cathedral of the new Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth, created out of the Western portion of the Diocese of Southwark.[244] The *Hampshire Telegraph*, of 12 August 1882, reported the opening ceremony

> . . . Roman Catholicism in Portsmouth entered upon a fresh epoch in its history. Its dreary, plodding struggles as a comparatively obscure mission ceased with that ceremony, and the responsible duties connected with an Episcopal See were formally undertaken. The faithful who have seen the welcome transition from the dark and dismal church, with its equally gloomy approach in Prince George Street, to the stately interior of the new edifice, may consider themselves fortunate in their generation.[245]

All this was said in spite of the fact that the Cathedral at that time consisted of only five bays of the nave. Horan never saw the Cathedral completed. He died in harness in Portsmouth in 1885, having ended his days as a Canon and first administrator of the Cathedral in Edinburgh Road.[246]

Conclusion

The history of the Catholic Mission in Portsea, from its inauguration in 1791 till its development into the Cathedral of a new diocese ninety one years later, follows the pattern found in many other urban Roman Catholic Mis-

Picture postcard, c1882, of Roman Catholic Cathedral, Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth, showing the first phase – five bays of the nave.

sions in England during the same period. Throughout its life the financing of this poor Mission was a problem, solved largely by the sacrifice made by certain key dedicated priests and Catholic tradesmen; however, in Portsmouth, there were no wealthy supporters. It was initiated by lay people and controlled by them until some time during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, when the influx of large numbers of poor relatively uneducated immigrants, in particular Irish, led to increasing demands being made on the priests and facilities available. This placed the clergy under considerable stress and led to their taking the control of the Mission into their own hands, to the exclusion of the layman. In Portsea, in particular. these problems were further exacerbated by the large military presence and the high percentage of Irish men in the army needing pastoral care from Catholic priests. This need, at first not met at all by the government, had to be provided and later, when Chaplains had been appointed, still needed supplementing by the civilian Mission.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

Val Fontana was born in London but was brought to Portsmouth when only eighteen months old, so has lived in the City most of his life. He was educated at St John's College, Southsea, and after service in the RAF, studied at the Portsmouth Municipal College, now the Polytechnic, where he obtained a double degree in sciences. After teaching at Colchester College of Technology he returned to Portsmouth to teach at his old school, St John's College, where he eventually became Head of Science and remained for 26 years until retirement in 1984. After retirement he was able to pursue his long held interest in history, and to this end studied for and obtained the Portsmouth Polytechnic Diploma in English Local History. He and his wife have been active members of the local Catholic community and the subject of this present paper is a logical outcome of this. His other interests include the history of the Victorian armed services, and in this connection he is involved as a volunteer guide on HMS *Warrior* (1860).

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[4] William Gates, *Illustrated History of Portsmouth*. Hampshire Telegraph Centenary Edition (Portsmouth 1900).

[5] Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section, pp. 1–12.

[6] There are many books which give accounts of the background to the History of Roman Catholicism in England from the time of the Reformation to the present. The following are a few examples:
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b) John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570–1850*. (1975).
c) Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*. (Oxford 1985).
d) Edward Norman, *Roman Catholicism in England* (Oxford 1985).
e) J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People*. (1984).

[7] Act of Supremacy, 1 Eliz I, c. 1. (1558–59).

[8] Between 1558 and 1778 several laws were enacted by Parliament and to some extent enforced. The principal ones were:
a) Act of Supremacy, 1 Eliz I, c. 1. (1558–59)
b) Act of Uniformity, 1 Eliz I, c. 2. (1558–59)
c) Act of Uniformity, 14 Car II, c. 4. (1662)
d) Test Act. 25 Car II, c. 2. (1673).

[9] The three principal Acts are:
a) First Catholic Relief Act, 18 Geo III, c. 60. (1778).
b) Second Catholic Relief Act, 31 Geo III, c. 32. (1791).
c) Act of Catholic Emancipation, 10 Geo IV, c. 7. (1829).

[10] 31 Geo III, c. 32. (1791).

[11] Abstract of Census for Portsmouth, 1801, p. 327.

[12] Parliamentary Papers, Population 6, 1851 Census (1852–53) pp. 48–9.

[13] Mary Hallett, *Portsmouth Water Supply, 1800–60*. The Portsmouth Papers No. 12. (Portsmouth 1971), pp. 3–4.
Jean Stanford & A. T. Patterson, *The Condition of the Children of the Poor in Mid-Victorian Portsmouth*. The Portsmouth Papers No. 21 (Portsmouth 1974), pp. 3–6.

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[17] W.A.A. MSS. John Knapp to Bishop Douglas. 6 Dec. 1803: 111/58. Knapp points out that when there is no priest at Portsea, out of a congregation of 150 only 20 cross the harbour to Gosport to hear Mass.

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[20] W.A.A. MSS. A.XLIV/27.

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[23] *Laity Directory, 1796*. n.p.

[24] *Laity Directory, 1807*. n.p. A complete set of the *Laity Directory* from 1799 to 1837, and the *Catholic Directory*, its successor, from 1838 to the present day is available at C(atholic). C(entral). L(ibrary), Francis Street, Westminster. For Directories prior to 1799, some are available at W.A.A.

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These give the owner of No. 2 Unicorn Street as George Cumpston and there is no evidence that he was a Roman Catholic.

[29] P.C.R.O. 114/OS2/16.

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[51] Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. p. 13.

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102 Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley, Ed. *The Irish in the Victorian City*. (1985). pp. 225–254. passim. Chapter by Gerard Connolly, 'Irish & Catholic: Myth or Reality'.

103 *Ibid.* pp. 13–36. passim. Chapter by M. A. G. O'Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in Nineteenth Century Britain: Problems of Integration'.

104 W.A.A. MSS. XLVI/1.

105 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49., *op. cit.*, Portsea Section, p. 24.

106 D. T. J. Bellenger, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

107 W.A.A. MSS. 111/c. no n., 24 Oct. 1799.

108 W.A.A. MSS. Thomas Gabb to Bishop Douglas. 2 Nov. 1799: 111/103.

109 W.A.A. MSS. Thomas Gabb to Bishop Douglas. 12 Nov. 1799: 111/104.

110 W.A.A. MSS. Thomas Gabb to Bishop Douglas. 28 Nov. 1799: 111/114.

111 *Universal British Directory*. (1798), Tobias Conway is not mentioned in this directory, and he is not mentioned again in any of the correspondence concerning Portsea.

112 W.A.A. MSS. 111/114.

113 W.A.A. MSS. Thomas Gabb to Bishop Douglas, 4 Dec. 1799: 111/115.

114 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. p. 35.

115 *Laity Directory* 1818, n.p.

116 W.A.A. MSS. 111/58.

117 *Ibid.*

118 D. T. J. Bellenger, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

119 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. p. 36.

120 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

121 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

122 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

123 *Laity Directory* 1807–27. *op. cit.*

124 W.A.A. MSS. Francis Delarue to Bishop Poynter. 27 June 1819: 111/c. n no.

125 D. T. J. Bellenger. *op. cit.*, pp. 200–216.
Mr le Marchand was a member of the Blanchardist sect that went into schism with Rome because they strongly objected to the Pope, Pius VII, making a Concordat with Napoleon at the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, it was not until 1818 that they were required by the English Vicar Generals to sign a declaration of loyalty to the Pope or resign or be suspended.
W.A.A. MSS. 111/c n no. Marchand declined to sign and, at first refused to leave the Gosport Mission's priest's house. However, Mary Ann Cornelius, who had been feeding him up to then refused to continue doing so. At which point he probably left.
P. D. A. Cornelius Bequest, unclassified box of papers: Mary Ann Cornelius (1764–1828) was a wealthy Gosport spinster, descendant of Admiral Sir Christopher Myngs (1625–66). She bequeathed her fortune to the Vicar Apostolic for use in Education.

126 W.A.A. MSS. Francis Delarue to Bishop Poynter. 3 Oct. 1814: 111/c19.

127 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49., *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. pp. 36–128. Contains Baptismal entries from various places in area.
128 W.A.A. MSS. 111/c19.
129 William Gates, *op. cit.*, p. 493.
130 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 42., *op. cit.*, p. 174. The old Catholic Cemetery of St James is on the Romsey Road going west out of Winchester, just opposite Hampshire Police H.Q.
131 10 Geo IV, c. 7. (1829).
132 Search through the Civic records, the local newspapers and the R.C. Archives for the period covered by this work shows no particular Roman Catholic of the Portsmouth area as being involved in civic affairs. However, it is unlikely that the Catholicism of a particular individual involved in civic affairs would be highlighted during this period. In any case the law requiring a person to make a declaration against transubstantiation in order to qualify for civic office was not abolished until 1867; no Catholic could make this declaration. After 1870, two of the Catholic priests, Horan and Connolly, are recorded as being members of the local School Board. *Hampshire Telegraph*. 4026, 18 Mar. 1871, p. 3. also 5138, 25 Jan. 1882, p. 3. From 1845 onwards there are several reports of liturgical, social and business activities of the Roman Catholic congregation of Portsmouth in the local newspapers.
133 F. Madden, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–33 & 45.
134 *Ibid.*
135 John Bossy. *op. cit.*, pp. 391–401.
Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 22.
136 F. Madden. *op. cit.*, Vol 3, p. 45.
137 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. p. 6.
138 *Ibid.* pp. 134–218. Also V. J. L. Fontana, *op. cit.*, Fig. 2.1. p. 24.
139 *Catholic Directory*, 1838, p. 32.
140 *Catholic Directory,* 1840, p. 32.
141 W.A.A. MSS. Poynter Papers. Returns filled in by the Revd Welch, dated 16 April 1837: c. 19
142 W.A.A. MSS. Bishop Griffiths Letter Book. 1833–47. p. 43: B5.
143 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. pp. 236–238.
144 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 1802, 24 April, 1834, p. 1.
145 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49., *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. p. 61.
146 *Catholic Directory*, 1842, p. 16.
147 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49., *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. pp. 216–223.
148 *Catholic Directory*, 1842, p. 16.
149 W.A.A. MSS. Bishop Griffiths Letter Book. p. 43: B5. Copy of letter from Bishop Griffiths to Perry: 26 April 1842.
150 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section, p. 223.
151 *Catholic Directory,* 1884, p. 54.
152 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 2409, 29 Oct. 1845, p. 4.
153 Robert E. Scantlebury, Ed. *Hampshire Registers*. Vol. III Brockhampton. No. 44 of C.R.S. (1949). pp. 142–143.
P.D.A. MSS. Kelly to Bishop Grant. 1 April 1853: PO1.10. unclassified.
154 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 2418, 29 Nov. 1845, p. 4.
155 Abstract of Census for Portsmouth Borough, 1841. pp. 254–255, 1851, p. 171.
156 *Catholic Directory* 1841. (Advert for the *Tablet.*)
157 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 42, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–17.
158 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. pp. 240–247.
159 W.A.A. MSS. Wiseman papers. Nos. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 19, 21 & 27. From December 1848 to November 1850: W2/6/2.
160 *Catholic Directory,* 1847, p. 54.
161 *Catholic Directory,* 1848, p. 55.
162 H. J. Hanham, 'Religion & Nationality in the Mid-Victorian Army', in M. R. D. Foot, Ed. *War and Society* (1973), p. 161, gives percentage of Irish in British Army as:
1830 – 42.2%: 1840 – 37.2%: 1868 – 30.8%.
163 In Victorian times members of the armed forces were required to attend religious services. Though many of these Irish Catholics would have been erratic in the practice of their religion had they remained civilians, as servicemen they had no choice but to attend the Anglican services or those provided for Non-Conformists or Roman Catholics. See Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley, *op. cit.*, pp. 225–240, passim.
164 P.D.A. MSS. Carey to Bishop Grant. 28 Sep. 1859 & 6 Oct. 1859: PO1.10. unclassified.
P.D.A. MSS. Donovan to Bishop Grant. 8 Dec. 1861: PO1.10. unclassified.
P.D.A. PO1.10. unclassified, is a file containing a package of letters dating from 1852 to 1884, originally held in S(outhwark) R.C. D(iocesan) A(rchives) but recently passed to P.D.A. for keeping. Most of the letters are written from the Portsmouth area to the R.C. Bishop of Southwark. The Bishop's replies to these were lost in the bombing of Bishop's House, Portsmouth, in World War II.
165 P.D.A. MSS. Carey to Bishop Grant. 6 Oct. 1859: PO1.10. unclassified.
166 Roger Swift & Sheridan Gilley, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–12. passim and pp. 267–290.
167 P.D.A. MSS. Philips to Bishop Grant, 15 Nov. 1858: MSS. PO1.10. unclassified.
168 P.D.A. MSS. Kelly to Bishop Grant, 20 Jan. 1853: PO1.10. unclassified. Sets out situation of Catholic Seamen in Royal Navy at that time.
S.D.A., Grant Papers. Contains much material relating to Roman Catholic Chaplains to the Armed Services from 1850 to 1870. In particular see the copy of the memo from C-in-C Portsmouth to Captains, 17 Dec. 1855: File A & N. unclassified.
169 W.A.A. MSS. Bishop Griffiths Letter Book, p. 168. Copy of letter from Bishop Griffiths to Evison, 5 April 1846: B5.
170 *Ibid.*
171 W.A.A. MSS. W2/6/2.
172 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 2735, 6 Mar, 1852. p. 5.
173 Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century, op. cit.*, p. 70.
174 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. p. 7.
175 Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century*, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
176 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 2667, 16 Nov. 1850, p. 5.
177 P.C.R.O. D/1/29. Indenture of sale, 12 April 1851.
178 P.D.A. MSS. PO1.10. unclassified: 1 April 1853.
179 *Ibid.*
180 Edward Norman. *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century, op. cit.*, p. 184–186.
181 P.D.A. MSS. Kelly to Bishop Grant. 21 Jan. 1852; 20 Jan. 1853; 1 April 1853; 8 & 9 Oct. 1853: PO1.10. unclassified.
182 P.D.A. MSS. Kelly to Colonel Jebb, 8 Oct. 1853: PO1.10. unclassified. This letter was sent with a covering letter to Bishop Grant and, apparently, not sent onto Colonel Jebb, by the Bishop because original MSS is in the R.C. archives. Colonel Jebb, later Major-General, was partly responsible for the creation during 1839–63, of centralised prison administration in England.
183 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section p. 7.

footnote.

184 P.D.A. MSS. Kelly to Bishop Grant, 18 Oct. 1853: PO1.10. unclassified.

185 W.A.A. MSS. Kelly to Cardinal Wiseman. 3 Jan. 1853, (sic): W2/6/6a. Written from Commercial Road East London, Kelly's new Mission. The date on this letter is probably wrong, and should read 3 Jan. 1854. In January 1853 Kelly was still Mission Rector at Portsea.

186 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 2906, 16 June 1855, p. 5.

187 Edward Norman. *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century, op. cit.*, p. 22.

188 P.C.R.O. CHU/2/2C. David Brent Price, Parson McGhie on Horse Back. April 1841. p. 68.

189 Dusantoy was Minister at St John's Anglican Church in Prince George Street, just to the East of the R.C. Mission.

190 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 2990. 24 Jan. 1857, p. 5.

191 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 2991. 31 Jan. 1857, p. 5.

192 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 3917. 3 Mar. 1870, p. 2.
Edward Norman. *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century, op. cit.*, p. 6.

193 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 3922, 19 Mar. 1870, p. 6.

194 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 2217, 17 Jan. 1842, p. 4.
2667, 16 Nov. 1850, p. 5.
2992, 7 Feb. 1857, p. 5.
3917, 3 Mar. 1870, p. 2.
3922, 19 Mar. 1870, p. 6.
4653, 21 Mar. 1877, p. 6.

195 Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century, op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.
Philip to Bishop Grant. 12 Sep. 1865: P.D.A. MSS. PO1.10. unclassified.

196 P.D.A. MSS. Kelly to Bishop Grant. 24 Sep. 1853; 30 Sep. 1853 & 8 Oct. 1853: PO1.10. unclassified.

197 British Library. S.8597.45. PNO S. *Tablet.* 9 Sep. 1865. p. 566–567.
P.D.A. MSS. Philips to Bishop Grant. 5, 6, 12, & 24 Sep. 1865; PO1.10. unclassified.
P.D.A. MSS. Wollett to Bishop Grant. 6 Sep 1865: PO1.10. unclassified.
P.D.A. MSS. Doran to Bishop Grant. 7 Sep. 1865: PO1.10. unclassified.
P.D.A. MSS. Donovan to Bishop Grant. 28 Sep. 1865: PO1.10. unclassified.

198 P.D.A. MSS. Philips to Bishop Grant. 5 Sep. 1865: PO1.10. unclassified. In answer to the Bishop's request, the Bishop's letter has been lost.

199 P.D.A. MSS. Chaplain-in-Chief to the French Navy, Mgr Coquereau, to Bishop Grant, (in French), 11 Sep. 1865: PO1.10. unclassified.

200 P.D.A. MSS. PO1.10. unclassified, 12 Sep. 1865.

201 P.D.A. MSS. PO1.10. unclassified, 11 Sep. 1865.

202 P.D.A. MSS. PO1.10. unclassified, 12 Sep. 1865. Mentions friendship between Donovan and the Anglican Revd Wilkinson.
Hampshire Telegraph, 2906, 16 June 1865. p. 5. Reports co-operation between Roman Catholic clergy and Non Catholic clergy in arranging a meeting in support of need for more educational facilities in town.

203 Gordon Taylor, *The Sea Chaplain.* (Oxford 1978). p. 379.
Edward Norman. *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century, op. cit.*, pp. 185–186.

204 Waldo E. Smith. *The Navy Chaplain in his Parish.* (Ottowa 1967), p. 77.

205 T. D. Manning & C. F. Walker. *British Warship Names.* (1959), p. 439.

206 P.D.A. MSS. Philips to Bishop Grant. 21 Nov. 1855: PO1.10. unclassified.

207 *Catholic Directory*. From 1867 to 1886.
T. D. Manning & C. F. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 293. *Melampius* was sold in 1908.

208 Anon. *R.N. Barracks Portsmouth & its History*. (Portsmouth 1932). p. 81. The Chapel of St Camillus was first sited on what is now the North East corner of the R.N. Barracks; see P.C.R.O. DC/PM5/31. Ordnance Survey Map, 1:2500, (Revised 1896). The Chapel is shown and marked as an R.C. Church.
Catholic Directory. From 1887 to 1965.

209 P.D.A. MSS. Clark to Bishop Grant. 26, 30 & 31st Dec. 1855; 8 & 28 Jan. 1856: PO1.10. unclassified.

210 Scantlebury, C.R.S. No. 49, *op. cit.*, Portsea Section. p. 7.

211 S.D.A. MSS. Wollett to Bishop Grant, 6 Nov. 1856 & 5 Mar. 1858: A & N, n no. unclassified. Two letters in particular show this.

212 S.D.A. Grant papers. Printed memo from Vice Admiral Thomas Cochrane, C-in-C Portsmouth, to respective Flag Officers, Captains, Commanders, etc., 17 Dec. 1855. File A & N. n no. unclassified.

213 Gordon Taylor. *op. cit.*, p. 379.
Edwards Norman, The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 185–186.

214 S.D.A. MSS. J. Carey to Under Secretary at the War Office. 27 May 1858: AR59/4.

215 *Catholic Directory*, 1860, p. 59.

216 S.D.A. MSS. AR59/4.

217 P.D.A. MSS. Philips to Bishop Grant. 6 Dec. 1860: PO1.10. unclassified.

218 P.D.A. MSS. Carey to Bishop Grant. 28 Sep. 1859: PO1.10. unclassified.

219 *Ibid*.

220 P.D.A. MSS. Philips to Bishop Grant, 14 Aug. 1860: PO1.10. unclassified.
P.D.A. MSS. Carey to Bishop Grant, 7 Sep. 1860: PO1.10. unclassified.

221 P.D.A. MSS. Donovan to Bishop Grant, 8 Dec. 1861: PO1.10. unclassified.

222 P.D.A. MSS. Donovan to Bishop Grant, 2 Nov. 1863. PO1.10. unclassified.

223 P.D.A. MSS. PO1.10. 7 Sep. 1860.

224 P.D.A. MSS. Doran to Bishop Grant, 10 Oct. 1862: PO1.10. unclassified.

225 Philip Priestly. *Victorian Prison Lives* (1985). pp. 91–96.

226 P.D.A. MSS. PO1.10, 10 Oct. 1862.
The Garden of the Soul by Richard Challoner, (1691–1781; Vicar Apostolic of the London District 1741-81) was first published 1741, and was in continuous use as a book of devotions by English Catholics until very recently.
The Poor Man's Catechism by John Mannock, O.S.B., Third edtion was published in 1770, it was still in use in the mid-nineteenth century.

227 P.D.A. MSS. Doran to Bishop Grant, 3 Jan. 1863: PO1.10. unclassified.

228 *Catholic Directory,* 1858, p. 56.

229 P.D.A. MSS. There are several letters from Philips to Bishop Grant dated from 1857 to 1865 which deal with his responsibilities as Dean. The first is 7 Oct. 1857: PO1.10. unclassified. This deals with problems caused by the illness of Revd Mount, Mission Rector in Southampton.

230 P.D.A. MSS. Dioc.2.30. unclassified. Collection of papers of the late Laurence Isherwood, who in the 1960s and early 1970s worked on the history of Catholicism in the Portsmouth

area. In an unfinished manuscript he mentions that Philips suffered from eczema, but does not give his sources of information.
William Gates. *op. cit.*, p. 495, says that Philips was ill, but does not say what with nor give his sources.

231 P.D.A. MSS. Wollett to Bishop Grant. 3 June 1864, PO1.10. unclassified.

232 *Catholic Directory*, 1865 and 1866.
P.D.A. MSS. John Cahill to Bishop Grant, 19 Nov. 1865: PO1.10. unclassified. This is John Baptist Cahill who became the second R.C. Bishop of Portsmouth 1900–10.

233 P.D.A. MSS. Horan to Bishop Grant, 10 Dec. 1868: PO1.10. unclassified.

234 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 3831, 5 May 1869, p. 3.

235 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 4077, 13 Sep. 1871, p. 3.

236 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 3806, 6 Feb. 1869, p. 5.
3916, 26 Feb. 1870, p. 5.
4094, 11 Nov. 1871, p. 6.

237 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 4026, 18 Mar. 1871, p. 3.

238 *Butcher's Directory,* 1874–75, p. 196.

239 *Chamberlain's Directory,* 1879, p. 204.

240 *Kelly's Directory,* 1888–89, p. 202.

241 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 4094, 11 Nov. 1871, p. 6.
The building that housed the Spring Gardens School is now the Masonic Hall.

242 P.D.A. MSS. Horan to Bishop Grant, 1 Jan. 1867: PO1.10. unclassified.

243 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 4915, 24 Sep. 1879, p. 3.

244 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 4711, 10 Oct. 1877, p. 2.

245 *Hampshire Telegraph,* 5220, 12 Aug. 1882, p. 5.

246 *Diocese of Portsmouth Year Book, 1988,* (Portsmouth 1988). Anniversary of John Horan's death is given as 21 Aug. 1885. p. 33. He is buried in Highland Road Cemetery, Southsea, near the grave of the Right Revd John Virtue, the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Portsmouth, who died in 1900. For an outline history of the Diocese of Portsmouth see: Gerard Dwyer, *Diocese of Portsmouth Past & Present.* (Portsmouth 1981,).

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